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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 1, JANUARY 1981



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## THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

### QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Jesus our Mediator. (1 Tim. 2:5.)
- B. Equally related to man and God. (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:30-35.)
- C. Understanding. (2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-9.)
- D. Sympathetic. (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:15.)
- E. Authoritative in mediation. (Matt. 28:18-20.)

### SUPERIORITY

- A. Both priest and king. (Zech. 6:13.)
- B. Greater than Abraham. (Heb. 7:4-10.)
- C. Unending. (Heb. 7:8, 23, 24.)
- D. Unchangeable. (Heb. 7:11-24.)

### ORDER

- A. Mystery of Melchisedec. (Gen. 14:17-20; Heb. 7:1-3.)
- B. Similitude of Melchisedec. (Heb. 7:11-28.)
- C. Minister of the true. (Heb. 8:1-5.)

### RESULTS

- A. A better Covenant. (Heb. 8:6-13; 7:22; Heb. 2:1-3; 10:29.)
- B. A better sacrifice. (Heb. 9:7-12; 10:1-3, 14.)
- C. A better priest. (Heb. 5:1-3; 7:26-28; Heb. 4:14-16.)
- D. A better hope. (Heb. 7:19.)

# EDITORIAL

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## INTO THE FUTURE

The year 1980 is gone. It will live now only in history . . . and in the mind of God. With this issue we start the grand and challenging adventure of producing volume 23 of **Carolina Christian**, hopefully spanning the whole of 1981. The paper was started in January 1959 and has continued uninterrupted ever since. Each year has brought new problems and new issues to cope with, and we do not expect the present year to be much different. Those associated with the paper have always tackled the problems and grappled with the issues, sometimes with unskilled hands but always with sincere hearts. God has blessed our puny efforts beyond our fondest dreams. We have survived against all odds, and even gained grounds, at times when survival itself was a marvel. We thus look to the future not with dread but with excitement. **Carolina Christian** is recording the story of the Lord's church in the Carolinas. Many libraries around the country are preserving it for future use. It is now the best source of historical information available for the church in the Carolinas for the past quarter of a century.

But what about the future? What does it hold? No one but God alone knows. But we face the new year with both faith and courage — faith in God and His providence and the courage to stand for what we believe is truth and right. While some ill winds are blowing, portending some stormy roads ahead, and we would be less than truthful were we not to confess some apprehensions about the state of the church in the Carolinas, we trust God to guide us in the right way and provide for us the means needed to carry on for Him. Our course is set (to continue on our present course) and our aim is clear (to teach the truth and promote the cause of Christ in the Carolinas). And whatever the future holds, we trust that our faith, work, struggles, and triumphs will be recorded here. May God help us to do right, to do His will, so that those following may continue to build on the foundation we have laid.

## WHY MEN ROB GOD

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." (Mal. 3:8, 9.)

The question is here raised, "Will a man rob God?" It is also clearly answered by God Himself, "You have robbed me." When this question is asked, if man was what he should be, it should be answered with a resounding no. Surely a man will not rob God! Yet as shameful as it is ancient, Israel had robbed Him and we believe that man is still robbing Him. They wilfully withhold from God that which is rightfully His. This is sinful. In fact, this is basically what sin is. It is a failure to acknowledge God as God. It is taking God off His throne and putting man on it. Sin violates the very nature of God. God is due absolute obedience, and to withhold that is to rob Him of His due. We are creatures of God. We belong to Him by virtue of creation. Because we are His, everything we are, everything we have, and everything we may become is His. God is thus due our love, honor, reverence, praise, obedience — the devotion of our whole being. When one refuses or fails to render that which is due

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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Him, he robs God.

But why would a man rob God? He robs Him because he no longer respects Him as God. He disrespects God and His word, not permitting Him to rule his life. He has turned to sin — and in sin he abandons the will of his Maker. Observe what had happened to the people in Malachi's day:

1. They had refused to see or accept God's love (1:2).

2. They had despised the Lord's name (1:6).

3. They were offering polluted sacrifice (1:7, 8).

4. They had profaned the table of the Lord (1:12).

5. Service to the Lord was a weariness to them (1:13).

6. They did not take the word of God to heart (2:2).

7. They had corrupted the covenant (2:8).

8. They had profaned God's holiness with idolatry (2:11).

9. They disregarded marriage (2:14-16).

10. They called evil good (2:17).

11. They had turned from God's ordinances (3:7).

12. They said, "No profit in serving God" (3:14).

When the depths of their wickedness is seen, it is no marvel that they could go a step further and commit the unthinkable sin of robbing God. They robbed God only because they had lost respect for Him. So it is today.

## FRESH NEW WORDS

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.)

In his book of sermons, entitled **Religion Without Wrappings**, David H.C. Read says, "There are times when I wish we could tear up the whole dictionary of conventional religion and start afresh with new words and new images to express what confidence in Christ can do for a man or woman who lives in the real world."

Well, we have good news for Mr. Read. He can do just what he wishes he could do, if he is willing to go back to the Bible and do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names. Or in the words of Peter, "Speak as the oracles of God."

January 1981

While this is not exactly new (it has been around for nearly two thousand years but men have buried it with the religious rubbish of the centuries), it is certainly different from conventional religion and would sound refreshingly new to most people. It offers a new start in expressing our praise and devotion to God and has a divine vocabulary — it will provide a new (to modern man) and divine language and action, the language and action of the Bible.

This has long been the plea of those associated with the Restoration Movement. We have discarded the dictionary of conventional religion and gone back to the Bible to speak as it speaks, believe as it teaches, and act as it instructs. Mr. Read, and the whole world, is invited to come along with us and restore to the earth pure, simple New Testament Christianity — a plan that enables us to start afresh without all the wrappings of modern denominationalism.

## A BUSYBODY

Paul instructs, "Study to do your own business." (1 Thess. 4:11.) This is good advice (besides being the will of God). Each of us has enough business of his own to keep him busy. Thus to get involved in the business of others will overtax our resources. In one of James Meadows' excellent Bible study books (on James, 1 & 2 Peter) one assignment is to define a busybody. We did so by saying it was one who is about the business of others of which he has no business. This is another way of saying that a busybody is one who meddles in other men's affairs. And when one does this he has more business than God meant for him to have. This reminds us of an item that is making its rounds in the bulletins — a dog story with a moral.

It is said that a preacher was driving along a road and overtook a farmer who was a member of the church for which he was preaching. The farmer's dog was tagging along dejectedly at his heels. The preacher offered him a ride and said his dog could come along also. The farmer climbed into the front seat and shoved the dog in the back seat. The next time they looked at the dog, he was panting and puffing, too tired



to wag his tail. "You must have been walking a long time from the looks of that poor dog," said the preacher. The farmer laughed, "It is not the trip that fagged him out. He was scampering back and forth across the road, sticking his nose into every gate, and wrestling with every stone wall. He had to chase every cat, and scare all the old hens he saw. If a dog barked at him, he barked back ten times in return. No wonder his is all in." The farmer pushed back the hat on his head and was silent for a moment. Then he said, "You know preacher, people are like that. If they get worn out on their journey through life, it's usually not the distance they've covered that makes them tired. It is the extra work they make for themselves, minding everybody's business but their own."

And so it is!

## KNOW-SO SALVATION

Sometimes we are asked (as if it would be contrary to our faith) if we know that we are saved. We always reply, "Certainly so!" Salvation is too important to be based upon guesswork. But how do we know that we are saved from past sins — what is the source of our knowledge? It is not some

subjective impulse felt in the physical heart. Nor is it some unusual feeling or physical or mental experience. Based upon such sources, many think they are saved when they are not. They have been deceived. To know that we are saved we must know the Lord's plan to save and know that we have applied that plan to our own sins. To illustrate this, consider the words of Jesus in the Great Commission: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) Here Jesus tells us who He will save. It is our obligation to believe and be baptized — that is what the Lord requires. When we do this the Lord has promised to save us. Thus if we believe the Lord's word (and if we do not believe Him we cannot be saved), we must believe that when we believe and are baptized He will save us. This is His plan . . . and His promise. He has promised to save all who will follow His plan. Thus we know we are saved because we know His plan to save and we know we have obeyed it. This is simply believing the Lord will do what He promised. There is nothing mysterious about it.

Many years ago we conducted a meeting in the mountains of North Carolina. A large family, who were visiting from out of state, came to the meeting every night. Each night the husband and father would ask the same question, and each night we would give him the same answer. As he left the building he would ask, "If that is true (referring to the plan of salvation as set forth in the Bible) how can one be saved?" Our reply was given kindly but firmly, "You can be saved by doing what the Lord says to do." There is no other way to be saved . . . and there is no other way to know that one is a child of God.

The Lord saves those who do His will (Matt. 7:21). Thus when we know His will, and know that we have done it, we can know that we are saved.

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# The Awful Consequences

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6.)

The text tells of those who were "once enlightened." That is, they knew and obeyed the truth. (See John 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:22.) But they fell away. The description is of complete apostasy. They have gone so far from the Lord's way and their hearts have become so hardened that repentance is not possible. Such is the most wretched of all conditions. Having forsaken the Lord and his way, "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (2 Pet. 2:20-21.)

When one comes to Christ for salvation and then leaves the church, denying the truth and living outside the will of Christ, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. 10:26-27.)

In our work in the kingdom we have seen nothing which has caused us more sadness than the tragedy of one who was "once enlightened" falling away. There was first the joy of having found the truth, the peaceful assurance that this is the Lord's way. What happens next? Perhaps it is temptation. Sometimes there are pressures exerted by others. Whatever the means, Satan instills doubt, causes discouragement, and weakens the resolve to hold on. Soon there is a marked lessening of enthusiasm, worship is forsaken, and contact with brethren is avoided. Efforts to restore

(see Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20) at first cause the conscience to sting, but the time comes when admonitions fall on almost deaf ears. When the heart gets hard enough there will be no words, no reminders, no conscience, which can bring about repentance and restoration.

Some case studies are demonstrations of the principle described in 2 Thessalonians 2:10b-12: "They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

One who does not love God's truth can be deluded into believing a lie. The result is damnation. What sets the stage for such a "strong delusion?" "They received not the love of the truth."

We have known those who were "once enlightened." We have heard statements like, "I am just not sure anymore." "I used to accept that, but now I have my doubts." Others have become diametrically opposed to the truths they once held dear.

Jesus said there are some "which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." (Luke 8:11.) The apostle Paul cautioned: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12.) In Hebrews we are warned against being among those "who draw back unto perdition." In the same context we find the words, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31, 38, 39.) Those who were "once enlightened" and "then fell away" (ASV) "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Such are the awful consequences.

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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited By

# Johnny Melton

## Biographical Sketch



Dennis Conner

Dennis Conner is a native of North Carolina, having grown up in the Lexington and Warners Chapel churches. He is a 1976 graduate of David Lipscomb College. Dennis is married to Terre Crosslin, a native of California and the daughter of former

Crosslin.

Dennis' articles have been published in **Carolina Christian** and the **Gospel Advocate**. Presently he serves as Brotherhood News editor for **Carolina Christian**. Dennis has been active in Carolina Bible Camp as a camper and staff member for 18 years, and serves on its Board of Directors. He has served the Warners Chapel church in Clemmons, N.C., as associate minister (1976-78) and is now the minister for the church at Yadkinville, having moved there in January of 1979.

missionaries to Jerusalem, John and Mildren

## Sermon

# Praising God In Song

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

### INTRODUCTION:

The people of God have always been a people of song with music playing a vital role in the worshipful lives of those who follow God. In the New Testament, music is given a central place in the life and worship of the Christian. Our study centers on two important passages, parallel passages, from the pen of Paul, that tell us something about the value, the nature, the motivation and the purpose of music in the Christian's life.

### DISCUSSION:

I. Ephesians 5:18-20.

A. Here we find an encouragement to believers to walk as children of light. (1) "Be not drunken with wine" describes a condition in which the individual is incapable of spiritual activity. (2) "But be ye filled with the Spirit . . ." The heart and life of the believer are to be so filled that they overflow in spiritual expressions. (3) In this exhortation Paul presents a contrast between debasing physical stimulation and the more noble spiritual stimulation. He then moves on to note the relationship of

that spiritual stimulation to song.

B. Christians are encouraged to communicate in song. (1) "Speaking to one another" may also be translated as "speaking to yourselves." Whether Paul is here addressing Christians individually or the corporate body is not the issue. Whether they do it individually or within the context of the public worship assembly, the Christians are encouraged to communicate their feelings through music. (2) There is a common characteristic in the three terms used here (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs) in that all three are expressions of our praise and adoration of God as we make our feelings known. (3) The instruments used in this musical communication of our feelings for God are the voice and the heart. Be sure to understand that God does not want mere lip service from us as we sing, but instead wants us to sing as we pluck the strings of our hearts. God looks upon our hearts, not merely our lips, as we sing.

C. Singing as a means of expressing thanks to God is taught in verse 20, "giving thanks always for all things . . ." The whole motive



and aim of our singing is to express our gratitude and thanks to God for His matchless goodness toward us.

## II. Colossians 3:16.

A. The context. (1) Chapter 3 is a discourse on the true Christian life. The Christian lives on a higher plane than the non-believer. His life is hid with Christ in God. He seeks those exalted things of a spiritual nature, not those things that are worldly and sinful. (2) **3:5-11** enumerates those sinful attitudes and practices that are to be put to death. (3) **3:12-17** emphasizes the positive side of Christianity. Here Paul catalogs the noble virtues of the Christian heart. It is in this context of true Christian living and virtues that the exhortation to sing appears.

B. The indwelling of the word of Christ, **3:16a**. The two primary ideas of this verse are the indwelling of the word of Christ and the teaching, admonishing and singing that result. (1) The encouragement to sing begins with an exhortation to be indwelt by the word of our Lord. To let that word dwell in us richly means to let it fill every corner of our lives with the blessed wisdom it brings. (2) The results of the indwelling word are teaching and admonishing through singing. Two important practical functions are accomplished through our singing: instruction and encouragement. Songs are to be rich in doctrinal content while at the same time serving as a means through which we admonish both ourselves and others; songs are to be a means of edification. (3) The forms which these musical expressions take are the same as in

Ephesians 5:19.

C. The attitude in singing, **3:16b**. (1) This singing is also to come from our hearts, just as in Ephesians 5:19. This is the test of acceptable singing before God. (2) We are to sing with an attitude of thankfulness and gratitude to God ("singing with grace"). As we sing, gratitude for God's loving favor and undeserved mercy toward us should fill our hearts to overflowing. Out of that abundance of thanks in our hearts we praise God in song. The more we appreciate His love and goodness the more we want to sing!

## III. Summary.

A. Four basic points to remember. (1) Singing is a spiritual expression of praise to God resulting from a Spirit-filled life that is richly indwelt by the word of Christ. (2) Singing is a means of doctrinal instruction and edification. (3) Singing must be with the heart. (4) Singing is to reflect an attitude of thankfulness motivated by the goodness and grace of God.

B. Questions raised by this study. (1) How faithful to Biblical truth is a particular song? (2) Am I singing from the heart or merely going through the motions? (3) Am I singing with a genuinely thankful spirit?

## CONCLUSION:

The world finds great delight in music, but no one has more reason to burst forth in song than the Christian. As a child of God our hearts are filled with joy and peace. The genuinely appreciative Christian cannot help but to express his feelings for God by means of joyful singing.

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# Don't Minimize Spiritual Values

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, N.C.

A farmer was walking through one of the great art galleries and paintings of the great masters were being pointed out to him. He was told that one of the pictures had been purchased for thousands of dollars. The farmer replied, "Why, I could paint all the fences on my farm for one-tenth of that!" Standing there before the painting of a master, thinking of whitewashing fences on the farm! How often do we stand in the presence of the symbol of the shed blood of Christ, and think of trivial things? When we speak of the money spent each year in saving souls, do we think at the same time of all the things the money could be spent for otherwise? When we give as the Lord has prospered us, do we think of what we could buy for ourselves? So many of us miss the real blessing that the Lord has in store for us by not being able to discern spiritual values.

Too many of us think only in terms of earthly things. How much is a thing worth in dollars and cents? Friends, when the work of the Lord is done we do not compare the results with what it costs. Things of this life are so insignificant when compared to things of eternal value. Too many of us can't enjoy the Christian life for thinking about what it will cost us!

When the farmer saw the work of a truly great artist he could not appreciate it. He thought it a waste of money! He could not see the hours and hours that had gone into it. He did not think about the many nights through which the artist toiled without sleep. He did not visualize the artist's disappointments, deprivations, and hardships. All he could think about was how many times he could whitewash his fences with the money that the painting cost. Why do so many of us condemn things as so much waste if they do not directly benefit us? Why are we basically so selfish at heart? We should be able to evaluate the material things of life. But much more we need to properly evaluate the spiritual blessings

guaranteed for us. What is the kingdom of God worth to us? Is it worth more than anything else in life? Jesus says it is! And He says that it must be put first (Matt. 6:33). What is the word of God worth to us? The Bible declares that the word of God is more precious than all earthly possessions. What is public assembly with the saints worth to us? Can we truthfully say with the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'let us go into the house of the Lord.'?"

Can we say, "I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness?" Unless we can say "yes" to these questions we are not properly evaluating spiritual things. Do we yearn for fellowship with the saints of the Lord, or would we rather go selfishly on our own way? What does the soul of our fellowman mean to us? What does the soul of a child mean to us? Are we interested in saving souls, which is our mission as Christians, or are we interested in merely "keeping house"? Is our Christianity limited to Sunday or does it permeate our lives and those around us every day of the week? Are we interested in "spreading the word," or do we say "just leave me alone, I am satisfied"? What have we done for Christ and for our fellowmen in times past? Can we truly say we have done our best, or do we review our actions, attitudes, and attainments for Christ with a tinge of shame?

Spiritual things are of such great importance and inestimable value, let us not reflect upon them by minimizing them! Let us forget about whitewashing fences when we stand in the presence of Almighty God. Let each of us resolve to be truly converted to Christ. If we do this all else will fall into place and we will be totally committed to Him. Let us strive always to climb upward. Let us supplement our faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with steadfastness, steadfastness with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. If we do these things we will put

spiritual things first, the church will grow, we will grow, souls will be saved, and we

will make our entrance into heaven sure and positive (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

# Fifteenth Annual South Carolina Lectures

**Jack Cooper, St. George, S.C.**

Another portion of the history of the Lord's church has been completed — the 1980 South Carolina Lectures. Now, Lord willing for time to go on, the Christians of South Carolina can look forward to the 1981 lectureship. SCL '80 was a great success as attested by some who have been a part of this great lecture program for a long time. A heartfelt thank you is extended to any and all who contributed to the profitable lectures program.

One key to a successful lectureship is the willingness for service of the host congregation. The membership of the St. George church was deeply involved in the lectureship. The preparation and work did not fall on one or two or just a few; the congregation as a whole did the various assigned jobs. A good number of working men took vacation time to serve SCL '80. All of this is pointed out to encourage other host congregations toward a successful effort.

Another key to a successful South Carolina Lectures is preacher participation. The speakers for SCL '80 overall did a tremendous job. One goal of the lectures is to encourage the newer and younger men in the state by including them on the program. These particular preachers did an outstanding job, but that is not said to detract at all from the excellence of others. To the speakers, the St. George church says, "Thank you very much!"

Attendance is another factor that attributes to success in Christian efforts. Several commented that the attendance at SCL '80 was outstanding. To those all around who cared so much as to attend, the Lord's church in St. George expresses the deepest gratitude. Some 130 registered for the lectureship. That includes the St. George membership, but keep in mind that

the average "crowd" in St. George is under 50. Of course there were some who came but did not register.

A lot more could probably be said about contributing factors to the successful South Carolina Lectures, but the true expression from the St. George church is gratitude for the opportunity to serve the Lord and our state in this capacity. In the matter of the South Carolina Lectures, let us all **keep-on-keeping-on**.

Cassette tapes of all the lectures for SCL '80 are available for \$1.00 plus shipping and handling. The tapes may be ordered from the Charlotte Avenue Church of Christ in Rock Hill, S.C. The St. George congregation does not have a feasible means for tape reproduction so the congregation at Rock Hill provided this service. For further information or to order tapes, write: SCL '80 TAPES, Charlotte Avenue Church of Christ, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S.C. 29730.

Again, the St. George church gives thanks to God and says, "Thanks to you" for the 1980 South Carolina Lectures. The Northeast church in Greenville, S.C. has graciously accepted the responsibility of hosting the 1981 Lectures, and Lord willing, the Ames Road church in Columbia will host the lectureship in 1982. **Plan now to attend.**

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# Dangerous Prayers

**Howard Winters, West Jefferson, NC**

A preacher of some sort (I know not what) went into a small town to conduct a meeting. No church had called him for that purpose and consequently no church supported his effort. The meeting was a complete failure because few, if any, local people attended. He left town downcast and completely disenchanted. But as he left he kneeled down at the city limits and prayed, "Lord, send fire down from heaven and burn this whole wicked town to ashes. They have hardheartedly rejected thy word and mercy and they now deserve thy wrath." What if God heard and answered such prayers? In this case, how much property would have been maliciously destroyed and how many innocent lives would have been snuffed out? This was a dangerous prayer because it misses the whole purpose of praying.

For sometime before I learned and obeyed the truth I worshipped with and preached some for the Pentecostal Holiness Church. These people believed strongly in what they called "the baptism in the Holy Ghost and with fire." I distinctly remember on one occasion when my oldest brother (who had himself preached for many years) was with me in one of the Pentecostal services. That night those in charge called the whole congregation (or at least all who would participate) down to the front of the building and prayed long and loud for God to send them the baptism of fire. After the service was over and we were going home, my brother said: "That would have been a surprised and sorry group tonight had God heard and answered their pray for a baptism in fire." (He believed as I do that when the New Testament speaks of the baptism in fire it has reference to the eternal state of damnation, not to some metaphorical promise made to Christians. Thus if God had answered their prayers, they would have been eternally lost.) This illustrates another kind of dangerous prayers — prayers prayed in ignorance of the true consequence of the answer.

But I want to be more specific as to dangerous prayers.

Prayer is serious business. I believe that it affects God, and thus changes the course of the whole world at times. For this reason it should not be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly. Sometimes we are asked to pray for the sick among those who have refused all their lives to obey God. This we believe is a Christian privilege . . . and a Christian obligation. But perhaps we should often ask, "Why should God bless you? Suppose He does bring you back to health and happiness again, what do you plan to do for Him?" Would it not be rather dangerous to pray for God to heal a man when his only intentions are to live in sin, in open rebellion to the will of God? Would we not be asking God to contribute to his life of sin? Young people sometimes pray, "Lord, if you will help me to get an education, a job, a home, etc., I will spend my life in your service and share my blessing with both You and others." God grants their petitions, but when all is attained, God is forgotten. And in the final analysis they have made a vow to God and failed to keep it.

When we consider the seriousness of prayer and some of the things for which we pray, our prayers often remind me of a woman I read about in New York City. She demanded that the blasting being done in order to build a new subway be stopped because it interfered with the signing of her pet canary. How often our prayers come close to asking God to stop the universe for our convenience.

Thus prayer is dangerous business, dangerous if we do not sincerely and truly mean what we pray. God hears prayer — it reaches the power that controls the world. The Lord promised Israel (and I am sure the principle would apply in our case): "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then



will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be opened, and mine ears attuned unto the prayer that is made in this place.” (2 Chron. 7:13-15.) This prayer was prayed by those in the ancient temple at Jerusalem, but would there be a difference in principle in what was promised God’s people then and what He has promised them today? Peter wrote to Christians, “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” (1 Pet. 3:12.) But to show that some prayers are dangerous, let us just suppose that God should take us serious and answer when we pray for our enemies, our rulers, for the forgiveness of sins on the basis of willingness to forgive others, and when we pray “thy will be done.”

**1. Prayer for enemies.** Jesus taught, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matt. 5:44.) To pray for another is to will God’s blessings and good pleasure upon him — to ask God’s blessings for his life. But when we utter a prayer for our enemies, those who hate and despitefully use us, do we really mean for God to prosper and protect them, to let heaven smile upon their affairs? Or do we secretly wish them failure in business, ill health, and the worst of misfortune? Since God **does** answer prayers, He may open heaven and pour out blessings beyond our power to conceive. Thus it is dangerous to pray for our enemies . . . unless we really mean what we say.

**2. Prayer for kings and those in authority.** Paul wrote, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.” (1 Tim. 2:1-3.) This is good in theory, but suppose we try putting it in practice. Here in America we have a representative democracy and a two-party system. A Democrat often finds himself liv-

ing under a Republican President, and **vice versa**. He has the instructions to pray for the man in office. But suppose he does pray for him, that he might rule in such a way that all might live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. If God hears his prayers, the President will probably become popular with a larger number of people because of the prosperity. When this happens he is almost sure to win the next election. Thus for a Democrat to pray for a Republican ruler (or **vice versa**) would almost certainly bring about the defeat of his own party. Is this what he really wants? It is dangerous to pray . . . unless we really mean it.

**3. Prayer for forgiveness of sins conditioned upon the forgiveness of others.** Jesus instructed His disciples, “After this manner therefore pray ye . . . Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” (Matt. 6:9-12.) Because we have all sinned (Rom. 3:9, 23; 5:12), and because no man can live above sin (1 John 1:8), we stand in constant need of God’s forgiveness. But what have we done when we pray, “Forgive us our debts (or sins), as we forgive our debtors”? We have simply conditioned the forgiveness of our own sins upon our willingness to forgive those who sin against us. If we fail to forgive others then we ourselves cannot be forgiven. Jesus continued, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matt. 6:14, 15.) We must therefore practice forgiveness toward others or else our own prayers may keep us from being forgiven — our own prayers may cause us to be lost. “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” is a dangerous prayer . . . dangerous unless we are willing to forgive those who sin against us.

**4. The prayer “Thy will be done.”** Jesus both taught and gave an example of praying for the will of God to be done. When His disciples came to Him and said, “Lord, teach us to pray,” He replied, “When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in

earth." (Luke 11:2.) Then in the shadow of the cross He cried out to God, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." (Matt. 26:42.) To thus pray is not a light matter. Just suppose we pray "thy will be done" and it is the will of God that: (1) we go teach our neighbor the truth; (2) we give our all to the cause of Christ; (3) we give generously to support every good work; (4) we become preachers or preachers' wives; (5) we preach the gospel in Africa, India, Russia or some other foreign country; (6) we take a hungry homeless child into our family or support one somewhere else; (7)

we prepare ourselves for leadership, elders, deacons, teachers, song leaders, etc. This list could be extended indefinitely, but we have said enough to show that to pray "thy will be done" is dangerous unless we sincerely desire to do God's will, regardless of what it may be for us.

Prayer is a wonderful privilege — a divine right of every child of God. Christians should pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). They should boldly approach the throne of God's grace (Heb. 4:16). But it is not a plaything, not something one should enter into lightly. It is serious business. It is dangerous business!

## THINKING THINGS THROUGH

# Who Controls Your Life?

All of us probably have a little streak of that peculiar nature of man which makes cults possible. We want someone to control our lives — someone to tell us precisely what to do and what not to do, and when to do or not to do it. In short, we want to be controlled — we want the freedom from the responsibility that comes with making our own decisions. We conceive of right and wrong as such complex subjects that we are willing for someone who is considered our superior or more mature to make the choices for us. And there are always those (such as cult leaders) who are willing to control our lives for us — they are willing to make the rules and bind them. They will gladly tell us what to do and what not to do. They will conform our lives to their conscience and leave us with no responsibility in the matter except to follow their dictates. They think they know what is best for us. So the dictators of communism. So the Pope of Rome. So Jim Jones and other cult leaders. And so, it seems, some of our own brethren.

Let us be frank: this is one of the most serious charges lodged against current campus ministries (usually branded as "the Crossroads Philosophy"). And while we have no personal knowledge of such being practiced on a wide scale basis or being endorsed by any of the leaders in the movement, the rumors will not die. Hardly a

week passes but that we hear new ones, and some from within the ministries themselves. Whether such rumors are true or false we are in no position to judge at this time. But one thing we do know: One has no more divine right to make a human rule and force it on others on:

- Who to date and marry;
  - How many hours one must spend in soul-winning or soul talks;
  - When and where to pray and study;
  - How many Bible studies or group meetings to attend;
  - How much time he is to take away from his family and studies;
  - Who he can have as friends;
  - Where to go for recreation or what recreation to engage in;
  - What courses he is to take in school;
  - What his life's occupation is to be;
  - What time he must arise in the morning;
  - What time to go to bed at night;
  - What books to read and what not to read;
- And a large number of other things that he does:

- To decide what percentage of one's income he is to give to the church;
- The precise degree of devotion one is to have to each program of the church;
- The posture of prayer;
- What hour of the day the Lord's Sup-

per must be taken or how much of the bread he is to eat or how much of the fruit of the vine he is to drink;

— How many verses of the song to sing or how long the sermon must be;

— How many and which verses of Scripture to memorize.

To bind such rules on others is to miss absolutely the meaning of Christianity. A Christian is bound to no one but Christ alone. He is the head of the church and He alone controls the lives of its members. Of course we have an obligation to teach others, but when one is taught the truth the teacher has no further obligation to him. It then becomes the obligation of the one who is taught to obey. He is then accountable to the Lord alone. And it is meddling of the worst sort to force rules of human origin upon him. Religious rules can be made only by Christ. His are sufficient and they do not need our puny efforts to aid them.

But the question arises: Has it not been proven that the percentage of those remaining faithful are far greater when a strict code of conduct (a closely knitted group bound by its own rules) is imposed on all? Perhaps so. But there is one vital thing that must not be forgotten: To whom are they faithful? To Christ or to the humanly imposed rules? We think that in general it will be to the rules rather than to Christ.

In matters pertaining to religion, Christians are free from the rules of men, even mature and sincere men who think they know what is best for others.

We thus sound a word of caution to those involved in campus work or the programs growing out of it: preach the word, but leave each one free to practice it in keeping with his own judgment. The Lord has given none of us the right to judge or control other men's lives, motives, and activity. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." (Rom. 14:4.) We may force other people to conform to certain rules (such as who to date, who to marry, when to pray, who to associate with, etc.) but we cannot force a change of heart. And when the heart is changed (converted to Christ) the human rules will be needed about as much as a tack in the shoe or a grain of sand in the eye. We cannot and we must not try to force all others to live by our own conscience (or by the standards we set for them). If a rule is not made by God, no man has a right to force it on another; if it is made by God, all those who love Him will gladly submit to Him in obedience. Our mission is to preach the gospel and it is the obligation of those who hear it to determine whether they will obey it or not.



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

### ON FOREIGN SOIL:

**San Salvador, El Salvador** — In recent weeks the world's attention has been centered on the violence and political instability of this small Central American country, but the gospel of Christ is reaching people despite the internal strife. Oscar Castellanos reports that about 500 people have been baptized into Christ so far in 1980. He sees the violence and instability as part of the cause for this interest in New Testament Christianity. In his own words, "As you can see, there is great fear. The people are searching for God."

January 1981

**Kumasi, Ghana** — Herry Reynolds has reported that as a result of a month-long campaign in Ghana, 745 have been added to the church. Most of the teaching was done through correspondence teaching and follow-up. At least one new church was planted. The work in Ghana is severely limited due to the economic situation, but yet it appears that the perseverance and dedication of the Christian laborers there is paying rich dividends.

**Edmond, Okla.** — Presently there are no missionaries of the Lord's church located in Scandavia. Denmark, Iceland, Finland,



Sweden and Norway, with a combined population of 24.4 million, make up the Scandinavian region. The Floyd Williamson family is currently making plans to locate in Gothenberg, Sweden, in order to carry on the Lord's work there, but presently they have no sponsoring congregation. Williamson spent his early childhood growing up in Sweden, where his parents once were missionaries. Any congregation interested in doing mission work in this neglected field should write to: Floyd M. Williamson, 13900 Benson Road, No. 201, Edmond, Okla. 73034.

**Kitwe, Zambia** — According to Chester Woodhall, a Zambian witch doctor named Chanda recently renamed himself "Jesus Christ" and appointed twelve apostles in an effort to build up his witchcraft business. That bit of blasphemous business made the national headlines and consequently involved the churches of Christ. Quotes by Woodhall, attacking the claims of the witch doctor, were also carried on the front pages of the papers. Since then, many of the witch doctors in Zambia have been attacking churches of Christ in several places for their bold stand.

## AT HOME:

**Amarillo, Texas** — On October 19, the Central church of Christ in Amarillo broke the unofficial record for single-day contributions for a church in the United States. The final tally on the Central contribution stood at \$2,213,169.00, eclipsing the nationally-noted \$2,005,637.00 of the Christians at the Broadway church in Lubbock, Texas. The money will be used to build a new auditorium and classrooms.

**Henderson, Tennessee** — The annual Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship will be held February 2-6. The theme for this year's lectureship is "Church Growth — A Blueprint for Stronger Churches." For more information, contact: William Woodson, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee 38340.

**PAUL HARVEY** recently commended the Clean Up TV campaign sponsored by the Joelton church of Christ in Joelton, Tennessee. Mr. Harvey, a nationally-known news commentator with his own syndicated segment, endorsed the planned boycott of companies that sponsor immoral television programs.

# The Case For Moral Chastity

**John Waddey, Knoxville, Tenn.**

A great number of people in today's society have rejected the God-established rules of sexual purity. Through the news media, the classroom and the halls of Congress, spokesmen for the New Morality are seeking to destroy all guidelines for moral conduct except the individual's desires and passions. Rejecting the concept of man being specially created in God's image, they view him only as a sexually motivated animal. They call for unlimited expression of man's physical desires with no restraint.

Christian's cannot allow themselves to be squeezed into the world's moral mode. Hear Paul, "For **this is the will of God**: (1) Even your sanctification; (2) That ye abstain from fornication; (3) That each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor; (a) because the Lord is an avenger in all these

things, as we forewarned you and testified. (5) For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, who gives his Holy Spirit unto you." (1 Thess. 4:3-8.)

The Child of God sees numerous reasons for living a morally pure life. Consider the following points:

I. Respect for God's law demands purity. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Rom. 13:9.) One cannot honor God and dishonor His divine law.

II. Respect for God's claim on our bodies calls for moral uprightness. "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit. Flee fornication . . . or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." (1

Cor. 6:17-20.) When one considers the awful price paid on Calvary to redeem us, he knows that he must honor and glorify God in his whole being.

III. The Christian abstains from illicit sex out of respect for the Holy Spirit, whose temple we are. He trembles at the very thought of defiling the temple in which the Spirit of God dwells (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19). Fornication defiles and God will not hold one guiltless who defiles His dwelling place.

IV. Because of our respect for Jesus who died for us and is our Savior and Lord, we live above the base passions of lust. He . . . "bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness. . . ." (1 Pet. 2:24.) Loving him, we keep his commandments (John 14:15).

V. Out of respect for our own selves, we abstain from moral uncleanness. Like Job, the child of God affirms, "Till I die, I will not put away mine integrity from me." (Job 27:5.) Any act of immorality robs one of his integrity. The Christian loves God first, then his neighbor, but then himself (Matthew 22:39). We must think of the consequences of sexual sin to our lives.

Our **soul** is affected, for fornication is always sin (1 Thess. 4:6-8).

Our **conscience** is affected, for it always brings guilt and condemnation.

Our **happiness** is affected, for we worry about the outcome and we fear detection.

Our **reputation** is affected, for even sinners know it is wrong. And our sins are sure to find us out (Num. 32:23). Remember a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. It takes years to repair a damaged reputation.

Our **physical health** may be affected, for those who are indulging in forbidden pleasures often contract venereal diseases that can ruin their minds and bodies and even be passed on to their lawful mates or future children.

Our **emotional health** is affected by such sin. Guilt and anxiety may cause immediate problems and even surface in the distant future to hound and plague our steps.

Our **future** can be ruined by ignoring God's moral standards. An unwanted child may well be the result of our immorality.

An unwanted marriage may be forced upon a young couple, yoking them to someone they do not really love.

Our **chances for a happy marriage** can be spoiled by foolish acts of immorality. Because of personal guilt, some mates suffer from frigidity and impotence, being unable to express their love to the legitimate partner. If your past mistakes become known to your partner, it could arouse suspicion and jealousy even years later. Some marriages fail because of problems related to past sins or immorality.

VI. Respect for our parents keeps a young adult from sexual misconduct. Children should honor their parents and their guidance (Eph. 6:1-2). The shame of immorality dishonors them and wounds them grievously.

VII. If we truly respect the person with whom we are tempted to sin, we would refuse to submit. It is a foregone conclusion that they will pay a price for the few moments of carnal pleasure enjoyed. If we love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:39), we would never subject them to the problems that accompany sin.

VIII. If we think of the child that might be conceived as a result of our foolish conduct, we would cease from sin. Few people are penalized so severely for a sin they had nothing to do with as a child born out of wedlock. The golden rule applies here, too (Matt. 7:12).

IX. Respect for our nation calls for proper moral behavior. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34.) God will eject a people from their land whose moral standards are like those of the Canaanites (Lev. 18:24-25). It is estimated that more than 10 million Americans have been born out of wedlock, at this present time.

Venereal disease is epidemic in the land. Homes are decaying, and marriages are disintegrating at a frightening pace. Personal integrity is rapidly disappearing across our land. A decent remnant, living soberly, righteously and godly in the evil world, abstaining from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, is the best insurance our nation can have. That is worth more than an arsenal of nuclear warheads or a

treasury full of gold.

May all of the King's children reject the alluring voices of worldly pleasure and

adorn themselves in pure garments of righteousness.

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# Slaughtering The Innocent

Jim E. Waldron, Hong Kong

Dr. and Mrs. Wilke in their **Handbook on Abortion** (Hiltz Publishing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio) have written "Our newly enacted permissive abortion laws (in western society) . . . represent a complete about-face, a total rejection of one of the core values of western man, and an acceptance of a new ethic in which life has only a relative value (and) man will now be allowed to exist only if he measures up to certain standards of independence, physical perfection, or utilitarian usefulness to others."

The abortion on demand people in our society are crying that women have a right to rid themselves of unwanted babies. They have judged already that little helpless and harmless unborn babies are no more worthy of life or liberty than a tumor or a hunk of meat. How long after government officials and courts start allowing doctors to kill unborn babies will it be before they start allowing deformed and feeble-minded children to be put out of the way; only a very naive individual who knows absolutely nothing about history would say we are not headed down that road. The **paterfamilias** of ancient Rome, which gave the father power of life and death over his children, led to sickly and deformed children being drowned immediately at birth, and so many females were simply exposed to die that professionalists gathered them up and raised them until they could be sold as slaves.

The sixth chapter of Proverbs names seven things that are an abomination to the living God and one of these is "hands that shed innocent blood" (Prov. 6:17). Little children are so innocent of all sin and crime that Jesus said "except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3.) In passing we note the doctrine that little

children have inherited sin is as far from the truth as mid-day is from mid-night else how could Jesus have ever used little children as the perfect example for those who must be born again to enter the kingdom (see John 3:5). God will not hold guiltless the doctors who shed the innocent blood of unborn babies, nor the calloused parents who allow it to be done. Their only hope if they have already sinned in this way is to turn to Christ in faith, true repentance and baptism for remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38).

Hitler, who destroyed innocent people because they did not measure up to his standards, is the classic example in modern history of a government official using his power to destroy innocent blood. A Nazi judge said to an American judge in Nuremberg concerning the atrocities of the Third Reich, "I never knew it would come to this." The American replied, "It came to this the first time you condemned an innocent life" (Wilke, p. 5).

There is a loud clamour going up in some quarters to abolish laws against immorality, saying laws force people into clandestine affairs and that fewer laws will make for less lawlessness; but this is absolute nonsense even as God's word says, "law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men (homosexuals), for menstealers, for liars, for false swearers and if there be any other thing contrary to sound doctrine." (1 Tim. 1:9-10.) Some men will be lawless whether there are laws or not and law is a must to control such.

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*"The difference between prejudice and conviction is that you can explain the conviction without getting angry."*

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# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Jacksonville.** Bob Lee has been added to the list of elders.

**Charlotte.** Fifteen members at Westside distributed 600 pamphlets from door to door recently. Ted Rush reports that two people have already been baptized this year who were first contacted by a door-to-door literature distribution.

## N.C. Baptisms

Wilkesboro, 2; Linville Forest, Winston-Salem, 2; Broad Street, Statesville, 2; Jacksonville, 1; Northview, Statesville, 1; Burlington, 1; Raleigh, 7; Boone, 1; Plymouth St., Kannapolis, 1; Salisbury, 1; Providence Road, Charlotte, 3; Westside, Charlotte, 1; Helen St., Fayetteville, 4. Total: 27.

## Raleigh

**AL BERGERON, Reporting:** 1980 has been a great year. With two more weeks to go at this writing, 94 precious souls have been baptized into Christ. Many others are diligently searching for God's truth for their lives.

We reached a landmark in our attendance by passing the 700 mark several times since September. It's always encouraging to see large numbers when we realize that every number represents a person.

Our contributions have exceeded our budget — we have averaged \$4,661.00 each Sunday for the first 49 weeks of this year. But even more encouraging is that the average for the last two months has been \$5,489.00. However, conversions, attendance, and contributions are not infallible measures of the spiritual condition of a church. It is great to know that in addition to the above, this year has been one of excitement and spiritual growth in almost every area of our congregational life. We are looking forward to 1981 with great excitement and anticipation.

## Wilmington, N.C.

**BILL DRISCALL, Reporting:** We have been working in a prison ministry here in Wilmington for about a year and a half. We hold services every Sunday night in the pre-release facility just outside of town. After much seed planting, the Lord gave the increase and we were privileged to baptize seven inmates into Christ.

## Cherokee

**LELAND WATERS, Reporting:** It was early in the morning on Saturday, November 22, that thirty men from the Hickory and Sylva congregations met on the Cherokee Indian Reservation in western North Carolina to help the brethren repair the roof of the building used for worship services by the Indians. By late afternoon, the old shingles had been torn off and hauled away, rotting sheeting had been replaced and new shingles had been laid.

The ladies of the Cherokee and Sylva congregations prepared a delicious noon meal for the workers.

While the roof was being repaired, a survey of the building was made to determine other repairs that needed to be made. Two problems that need immediate attention are insulation for the ceiling and repairs to the stonework outside the building. The ceiling needs about six inches of insulation. Some of the stones are already loose and ready to fall. Adding insulation and repairing the stonework should reduce the amount of fuel oil used to heat the building. Contributions will be needed to purchase insulation. If you had intended to make a contribution to repair the roof but did not, why not help with the insulation?

## Bryson City

**ORLAN SAWAY, Reporting:** The church in Bryson City meets in a building on Johnson Branch Road, just off Old Highway 19 East, between Bryson City and Cherokee, just east of the Tuckasee River Bridge. The auditorium would seat about a hundred, if crowded. The building



also contains an office and three classrooms, a baptistry and dressing rooms, and two other rooms beside the baptistry. So far I have not seen the plant in full use. The church also owns a small three-bedroom house which sits beside the meeting house.

We have been in Bryson City since September, 1979. Besides the regularly scheduled meetings at the accepted times, I also preach on the local radio station, WBHN, from 12:05 to 12:30 on each Saturday afternoon. We place an advertisement in the local weekly paper every week, also.

Progress is slow, not unexpectedly. I preached in Appalachia seven years; at Middlesboro, Kentucky; Wise, Virginia; and Boone, North Carolina, in the late fifties and early sixties. I am prepared to work steadily, not seeing rapid growth. But this is a good mission field; I understand that neither Graham nor Cherokee counties, just west of us on the Tennessee border, has brethren meeting regularly. It is strange that with numerous churches in Nashville, McMinnville, and Cookeville, congregations of the brethren are missing in counties which join Tennessee!

## Wilmington

F.W. MATTOX, Reporting: Wilmington is the largest city in the southeastern part of North Carolina. It is not far from where part of the early Restoration history was made, yet the church has remained small and this part of the world is still very much a mission field.

The Church of Christ in Wilmington began in 1930 when five women began to meet in the Odd Fellows Hall. Today there are two congregations with attendance of about 80 and 140. The Pine Valley congregation is the larger and has one black member. The Central congregation is largely black and there is great fellowship and cooperation between them.

Floyd Dethrow, the minister for the Central church has a very effective radio program and bus program and does a great deal of teaching in homes.

The Pine Valley church has Bill Driscoll as the regular minister. He is assisted by F.W. Mattox, who preaches occasionally and serves as one of the elders.

The area around Wilmington has been very responsive to the Bible Correspondence Courses offered by the Mt. Leo congregation of McMinnville, Tennessee. Presently, there are over 100 contacts who have completed this thirty-lesson course by Monroe Hawley.

The Pine Valley elders in cooperation with Mt. Leo elders, are looking for a black preacher who would move to Wilmington and follow up on these contacts. This man needs to be black because these contacts are black and in this area it has been proven that a white man is not as readily received into these homes. Any help in finding an energetic personal worker to do this work would be appreciated.

Contact: F.W. Mattox, Pine Valley Church of Christ, 3601 South College Road, Wilmington, N.C. 28403.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Union.** The Palmetto congregation and the By-Pass congregation have merged. This decision was made at a meeting of leaders of the two congregations on November 25 to become effective on January 4, 1981. The church in Union will use the By-Pass facilities. T. Carter Geer writes, "We foresee great things for the church in Union as a result of this action and we ask your prayers to the end that this may be the case."

**Union.** Gray Flippen, minister of the Palmetto congregation suffered a heart attack on December 6.

**Chester.** Andy Brown of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, will hold a meeting January 16-18.

**Greenville.** The new address for Andy and Phylis Ritchie (formerly at Northeast) is: 3868 Centrobi Court, Florissant, Mo. 63034. We understand a replacement for brother Ritchie has not yet been named.

**Rock Hill.** Interest continues to grow in the monthly Preachers' Workshop. These sessions are well attended and the speakers present useful and informative materials. For information write to David Pharr or call 327-7853.

Several South Carolina churches contributed to relief funds for the earthquake victims in Italy. Among these were Central,

Spartanburg; Myrtle Beach; Duncan; and Northeast, Greenville.

**S.C. Baptisms**

Chester, 5; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Northeast, Greenville, 3; Shandon, Columbia, 14; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 3; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 1. Total: 28.

**Clemson, Foothills**

JOHN OWEN, Reporting: The Foothills church of Christ, formerly known as the Oconee church of Christ, has had a great year! We began 1980 with approximately 30 members and since that time have had 35 baptisms with ninety-five per cent remaining faithful. Almost all of these conversions (one half of whom are Clemson University students, half of whom are permanent residents) have come as a result of small-group Bible discussions held on campus and in members' homes. Sunday morning attendance has risen steadily to 85-95 persons, approximately thirty per cent of whom are non-Christian visitors on any given Sunday. At the present we are fortunate enough to be able to hold services on Clemson University's campus having had a variety of meeting places in the last two years. We have been seriously searching for a permanent meeting site since becoming financially self-supporting a few months ago. We ask

for your prayers and support as we continue to advance the gospel in Clemson and the surrounding area.

**Georgetown**

DAVID FERNEYHOUGH, Reporting: The Georgetown church of Christ of South Carolina has appointed David Ferneyhough as their new minister. Brother Ferneyhough moved from Staunton, Va., where he labored for three years. He was awarded an AA degree in Bible from East Tennessee School of Preaching, Knoxville, Tennessee, and is a member of the Advisory Committee. He has participated in five campaigns for Christ and holds several meetings each year. He is author of many articles throughout the brotherhood. David and his wife, Shirley, have 3 teenagers.

Since the Ferneyhoughs moved to Georgetown, there have been 21 rededications and two baptisms.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 2, FEBRUARY 1981



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C292

## A COVENANT IN BLOOD

Gen. 4:10; 15-18

Jer. 34:18-20

Heb. 9:20; Matt. 26:28

Aliens  
Strangers  
Without God  
Without hope  
Eph. 2:12-16

*B*  
*A*  
*P*  
*T*  
*I*  
*S*  
*M*

**BODY OF CHRIST**

Isa. 55:8, 9  
GOD  
Rom. 3:24-26

Baptized into death, Rom. 6:3

Baptized into the body, 1 Cor. 12:13

Remembering the covenant in blood, 1 Cor. 11:23-30

— Clayton Winters

# The Psalms

**Johnny Melton,\* Statesville, N.C.**

The Old Testament book, Psalms, is perhaps the best known and best loved book of the Bible. The Hebrew title (**sepher tehillim**) means "book of praises." The Greek versions bear the titles **Psalmoi** and **Psalterion** which give us our English titles Psalms and Psalter.

In life and death the Psalms have deeply affected thousands upon thousands. It was a psalm that comforted Chrysostom fleeing into exile, Martin Luther in his contest at Worms, George Wishart facing the plague at Dundee, Wycliffe, on his deathbed, and John Bunyan in the Bedford jail. In the darkness of her Canterbury dungeon, Alice Benden sang a psalm. John Huss, condemned by the Council of Constance in 1415, as he ascended the stake, quoted Psalm 31, as did Jerome of Prague a year later. In 1498 Savonarola, body mutilated, but having been spared a right hand to write a confession of conformity to the pope, used his right hand to write a meditation on Psalms 31 and 41. "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," said Jesus, quoting Psalm 31:5, as he died, which same words have been on many lips on death's day, including Stephen, Polycarp, Basil, Bernard, Columbus, Luther and Melancthon. (**The Story of the Psalms**, Henry Van Dyke, pp. 10, 11.) But not only can comfort and solace be found on these beautiful pages of inspiration, but joy and enthusiasm burst forth in jubilant song as well.

In his book, **Living Messages of the Books of the Bible**, G. Campbell Morgan raised this question, "Now, why is it that this book has been so perpetually used?" Mr. Morgan then offers this answer: "First, because it is a collection of simple, honest, human experiences. I very much question if there be any circumstance possible to human life but that some Psalm exactly expresses the experience thereof. The Psalter contains anthems of prosperity and dirges of adversity. It has major songs which celebrate holiness, the experience that

comes when men are led to the heights and live above the snow line. It has minor songs bewailing sin, the experience that comes when men have willfully, persistently sinned and sunk to the depths. Songs of hope, the experience when in circumstances of difficulty, gleams of the coming day are seen upon the distant horizon. Songs of despair, the experience in hours of darkness, when there seems to be no glimmer of light. I repeat, it is impossible to think of any human circumstances which do not find expression in this book. . . . We have not touched the deepest fact in the book of Psalms when we say it is intensely human. The deepest thing is that it is a collection of songs in which human experiences are brought into the presence of God. They show how man feels and thinks and speaks and acts when he is conscious of God. That is why the Psalms live today."

Indeed the Psalms contain a storehouse of treasure for those who read them. The purpose of this special issue is to focus attention on this great book. We believe with Paul, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.) Therefore, we believe Christians can

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## EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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\*Guest Editor

study this Old Testament book with great profit.

Because of space limitations we have limited this study to six representative psalms: Psalm 1, Psalm 19, Psalm 23, Psalm 90, Psalm 100, and Psalm 139. Each of these passages has been carefully re-

searched and written to offer not only the meaning of the original text, but also an appropriate application to our lives today.

It is our fervant desire that this brief look at the Psalms will be a springboard to a lengthy study of a tremendous book.



# Psalm 1

**James Meadows, Spartanburg, S.C.**

Psalm 1 needs no title, because it is so plain, and because it is itself a preface to all the great matters which come after it. "The sum of this Psalm is that the just and he alone is blessed. It incites us to the love of righteousness by presenting proper hopes. By pointing to the dreadful end of the wicked, it warns us to flee from all iniquity. It is a compend of all the Psalms, and indeed of all Scripture. In many of our Bibles the caption given is, 'The happiness of the godly. The unhappiness of the ungodly.' " (W.S. Plumer.)

## The Righteous

**First**, "blessed is the man. . . ." The word "blessed" is plural, denoting the richness of the variety of blessings secured to the righteous. Adam Clarke says it "may be considered as an **exclamation** produced by contemplating the state of that man who has taken God for his portion; O thee blessedness of the man!"

**Second**, the negative characteristics of the righteous are given. (1) He "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly" (wicked, ASV). "Walketh" refers to the whole round of activities of one's life. "Counsel" denotes not merely the advice of the wicked, but his aims, maxims, principles, and practices. The "ungodly" or "wicked" are those who have no place in their thoughts and lives for God (Rom. 1:18-28). "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." (Prov. 4:14, 15.) (2) He does not stand "in the way of sinners." "Sinners" are those who "miss the mark" or "pass over the prohibited limits." The sinner not only does not do good, but he does evil. This

man adds outward transgression to the sinfulness of his heart. "To stand" means that one has stopped long enough to allow evil to get a grip; it denotes a decaying sensitiveness to sin.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As to be hated, needs only to be seen,  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

(Alexander Pope)

(3) He sitteth not "in the seat of the scornful" (scoffers, ASV). "Scoffers are those who scorn and deride truth and sacred things. Peter mentions those who would mock, ridicule, and hold up to scorn the idea of the Lord coming again (2 Pet. 3:1-4). The righteous man deliberately refuses association with people of this type.

"A steady progress in sin is indicated — **walking, standing, sitting**. First, stepping aside from the right path into crooked ways in compliance with evil counsel; secondly, continuing a line of conduct conscience condemns; at last, sitting down at the banquet of sinful pleasure, conscience drugged or seared, God openly despised. A picture of how many lives once bright with hope." (E.R. Condor.) Two Bible examples illustrate this point: Achan saw, coveted, and took (Josh. 7:21); David looked upon Bathsheba; desired her; lay with her; tried to deceive her husband; got her husband drunk; and finally had him murdered (2 Sam. 11).

**Third**, the righteous man is described positively under two heads. (1) "But his delight is in the law of the Lord." "Delight" means "pleasure," "desire," a matter in the mind that is acceptable, delightful, desired. It is from a root word which means "to incline to . . . fig. to be



pleased with, desire . . . (have, take) delight, desire favor, like . . ." (Strong). The righteous man loves the word of God, not only to read, but to follow as the rule of his life. "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 119:97.) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6.) "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." (1 Pet. 2:2.) (2) "And in his law doth he meditate day and night." "Meditate" means "to ponder or reflect on; muse over; consider; contemplate" (Webster). "The power of reflection chiefly distinguishes a man from a brute. The habit of reflection chiefly distinguishes a wise man from a fool. . . . Without meditation grace never thrives, prayer is languid, praise dull, and religious duties unprofitable." (W.S. Plumer.) Meditation on the word of God on the part of the righteous is not an occasional practice, but it is his work day and night. Paul told Timothy to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . . . Meditate upon these things. . . ." (1 Tim. 4:13, 15.)

**Fourth**, the four results that follow the way of the righteous are clearly named. (1) "**And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.**" The words, "rivers of waters," are sometimes used figuratively (Psa. 119:136; Lam. 3:48); they are used to refer to actual rivers (2 Kgs. 5:12); and they are used to refer to artificial streams (Prov. 21:1; Deut. 11:10). "The original words properly denote canals or channels, as customary means of artificial irrigation. Hence the single tree is said to overhang more than one, because surrounded by them." (Alexander.) To be **planted** suggested **permanency** of connection. He shall be rooted, anchored, and steadfast (Col. 2:5-7), he shall be fed and nourished from an unending fountain of rich treasures. (cf. John 4:14.) (2) "**That bringeth forth his fruit in his season.**" "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." (Isa. 92:13, 14.) The righteous man will continue to be a vigorous, productive, fruit-bearing servant of the Lord all

the days of his life. "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15:8.) (3) "**His leaf also shall not wither.**" What a contrast to the threat of Isaiah against the wicked of his time: "Ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden, that hath no water." (Isa. 1:30.) "His **profession** of true religion shall always be regular and unsullied; and his **faith** be ever shown by his works." (A. Clarke.) Just as a tree planted by the "rivers of water" exhibits "all the fragrance and all the beauty of a perpetual spring" so shall it ever be with the righteous man. His life is evergreen. (4) "**And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.**" This statement contains a general truth, "an affirmation as to the natural and proper effect of religion, or of a life of piety." (A. Barnes.) Paul wrote, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8.) The phrase "and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" is sometimes translated "in whatsoever he doeth, he shall prosper," suggesting that the man who delights in God and in his word, shall prosper, regardless whether the enterprises in which he invests succeed or fail. (cf. Joseph, Gen. 39:1-23.)

### The Ungodly

**First**, there is a tremendous difference between the righteous and the ungodly. "**The ungodly are not so.**" In contrast to the righteous the ungodly "walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, sit in the seat of the scornful; their delight is not in the law of the Lord, neither do they meditate in God's word day and night; nor are they like a well watered tree, bringing forth seasonable fruit, and covered with green foliage; and whatsoever they do shall in the end work their shame and overthrow. A sad and utter defeat of all their plans await the ungodly." (W.S. Plumer.)

**Second**, the ungodly are "like the chaff which the wind driveth away." The Hebrew word **chashash** rendered **chaff** means dry grass or hay. Chaff is used throughout the Scriptures as an emblem of what is weak and worthless, and as a symbol of the



destruction of the wicked. (Job 21:18; Psa. 35:5; Isa. 5:24; 17:13; Matt. 3:12.) The "ungodly" or "wicked" are not necessarily gross sinners, as that expression is generally understood, but may be active, religious people who have failed to let the will of God control their lives (Matt. 7:21-23), or they may be people who have buried their talents (Matt. 25:14-30).

**Third**, the ungodly "shall not stand in the judgment." The word "stand" means to endure or withstand a test. The lives of the wicked are not built on the word of God and they cannot withstand the trials of life (Matt. 7:24-27), but particularly, as this verse probably means, they will not be able to maintain their cause and have any support in the final judgment (Ecc. 12:13, 14; 1 Tim. 5:24, 25). They will not be found among those acquitted and approved by the Judge of all the earth.

**Fourth**, the ungodly shall not stand "in the congregation of the righteous." God's people are now dispersed all over the world, but the day is coming when they shall all be congregated together; there shall be an eternal separation of the friends and foes of God (Matt. 25:46). In this life the tares and the wheat grow together (Matt. 13:24-30), and the sheep and goats often herd together (cf. Matt. 25:31-46), but no wickedness shall be in that eternal city (Rev. 21:27). This principle needs to be loved and practiced in the church today (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-13).

### The Lord Knows

**First**, "the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous." To "know" means to recognize and to approve. God is said to "know" those of whom he approves, and on whom he "lifts up the light of his countenance" (Psa. 4:6). "Only those whom God approves, and loves, as his friends, will be able to stand in the day when the great decision shall be made. . . . No one can be admitted to the favor of God, and to the rewards of heaven, whose character is not such that it will bear the scrutiny of the Omniscient eye." (A. Barnes.)

**Second**, "the way of the ungodly shall perish." This is given as the reason why the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment. God does not approve or recog-

nize their ways. The Lord will say to some in the judgment, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity," i.e., I never recognized or approved your way (Matt. 7:23). David was envious and fretful of the wicked's prosperity (Psa. 73:1-3) until he went into the "sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." (Psa. 73:16, 17.) Let the wicked prepare to meet God, and know their end if they continue in their wicked state (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

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*"Failure is one thing that can be achieved without effort."*

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# Psalm 19: The Glory Of God

**Douglas Couch, Asheboro, N.C.**

Augustine once said that the word of God was deep enough for elephants to swim and shallow enough for sheep to drink. This certainly applies to any one of the Psalms because they possess both simplicity and profundity. Psalm 19 is of particular interest for we see its major theme, the glory of God, developed along three lines of thought: the glory of God as revealed within His creation, (19:1-6); the glory of God as revealed within his word (19:7-19); and, the glory of God as revealed within his grace, (19:11-14).

## **The Psalm Examined**

### **THE CREATION REVEALS GOD'S GLORY**

Answering questions that science will never be able to answer, David reflects on the message of the heavens. His opening statement literally reads, "the heavens are telling the glory of God. . . ." In the first few verses, David compares the heavens to a mighty preacher. This preacher is persistent in his message for he preaches both day and night (v. 1-2). He is innovative because he preaches visual sermons (v. 1, "sheweth his handywork"). Universal is his message for it is preached throughout "all the earth" (v. 4). So plain are his messages that the apostle Paul could say, "the invisible things of Him (God) . . . are clearly seen . . . so that they are without excuse." (Rom. 1:20).

The subject of his sermon is the glory of God as revealed within His creation. David maintains that even if we did not have the word of God to tell us of God, we could still learn many things of Him from the cosmos. We could learn of God's power by looking at the word. No man can create matter. He may take existing matter and provide the right conditions to make a new synthetic substance. Therefore, the creation implies superhuman power. By examining the evidence we have concluded that our Creator also possesses eternal power (Rom. 1:20).

The universe is like a giant watch which will come to a complete stop given enough time. Seeing, therefore, that matter is not eternal, God must be eternal. Our God is also a Being that loves beauty and art. These qualities of the universe are all mere reflections of the greater glory of God.

From these opening verses we learn an important point: we should not be guilty of pitting science against religion. In an age when basic religious tenants are being challenged by "so-called" science, the Christian must not compromise his beliefs. We must remember that science and Scripture are both founded on a system of law and order because God is the originator of both. If anything, science and nature are witnesses of God. Paul stated in his sermon in Lystra, God "left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. . . ." (Acts 14:17.)

The heavens indeed tell of the glory of God, but not of His will. Therefore, we must leave the message of creation and go to a new source to discover God's counsel for us. We must go where He has revealed Himself more fully, namely, His word.

### **THE WORD REVEALS HIS GLORY**

In swift transition David changes his meditations from the works of God to the word of God. So impressive is God's word that David must use several descriptive titles, qualities, and several divine effects of the word of God to show its superiority as a revelation.

"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Although David may have been thinking of the Law of Moses, in principle, the New Testament law of liberty is considered here (James 1:25). There are no errors in Christ's law. Jesus affirmed in John 10:35, "the scripture cannot be broken." The divine effect of the law is conversion of the soul. Scientific truth can lead men to admit God's existence but it cannot convert them. I have never heard of

an atheist building a home to care for orphans or widows, but I have seen those converted by the Law of Christ caring for others.

A second description of God's word is mentioned in verse 7b. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." The word "testimony" could be translated "reminder." In other words, God's utterances are reminders to us of what we should do and what we have failed to do. His reminders are not unstable or vacillating. Those who build on them are made strong (Matt. 7:24-25).

A third epitaph is "statutes." What are God's statutes? They are right. As a doctor prescribes the right medicine and as a counselor gives the right advice, so the Bible guides man in the right way to heaven. Resulting from this advice is a happy heart to all who obey (Phil. 4:4-8).

"The commandment of the Lord is pure." No mixture of error defiles it. Enlightened eyes are given to those who would drink from its pure waters. With spiritual vision, they are able to discern between truth, error, good, evil (Heb. 5:14; 6:4). Notice the graduation of the effects of the word: a disciple, a happy disciple, a discerning disciple.

"The fear of the Lord is clean." As we learn more about God from His word, we should be increasingly reverent toward Him. God demands that we fear and stand in awe of Him. Only when we respect Him and His laws will we be spiritually clean. Those who are clean will live forever (Rev. 21:27).

Many people would try to second guess God in His judgments. The psalmist reminds us that all of His holy verdicts are true and righteous.

David uses two metaphors to show the value of God's utterances: gold, to show that keeping the law is more valuable than seeking material wealth; and honey, to show that spiritual pleasure is superior to physical pleasure.

The Bible reflects the glory of God because it tells the story of Jesus who is the glory of God (Heb. 1:3). If we do not respond to the story of Christ we cannot have salvation. In the same way David reflects on

his response to the law of God which will bring him grace.

### SALVATION REVEALS HIS GLORY

David now reflects on his response to God's law. He remembers the number of times he was warned by the law and was rewarded by the law (v. 11). Realizing that the law makes him conscious of the different classes of sins, David prays for God's grace to forgive him of: his errors, or wanderings from the law; his secret sins; and his sins of presumption. All sins are dangerous, but presumptuous sins are the most dangerous of all. Those are the sins that we commit boldly and consciously. Someone has described a presumptuous sin as "when we tempt the devil to tempt us." There is also the danger that we may become a slave to our sins. Only conversion can break the chains of sin (Rom. 6:16-18).

After praying for God's grace, David is ready to approach God in worship (v. 14). We must remember that worship is a spiritual action that is designed to increase our spiritual consciousness. We cannot worship properly if our spiritual senses are dulled by the burden of sin.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart. . . ." As a shell is nothing without the kernel, so is our worship vain (empty) if our words are not accompanied by mental meditation. David realizes that certain worship is not "acceptable in his sight."

David closes his Psalm with a three-fold benediction. "O Jehovah" expresses the eternal, self-existence of God. "My strength" (rock, margin ASV) expresses the protective power of God. Notice the use of the possessive pronoun "my." Salvation is expressed by the word "redeemer."

Psalm 19 is a homiletical haven for every preacher. Space has not permitted us to examine the fragrance of every flower in the garden of this chapter. But we have been allowed to walk through this garden and catch a glimpse of the glory of God as he has revealed himself in his creation, his word, and the salvation provided for sinners.





# Psalm 23: The Shepherd Psalm

David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

The 118 words of Psalm 23 provide no truth that is not taught in other passages. Neither are there any assurances or comforts which we could not know without this psalm. But for beauty of expression and poetic force it is unsurpassed.

While it is called the "Shepherd Psalm" there is actually a change in figures in the last two verses. Verses 1-4 are built on the figure of the shepherd and the sheep. The closing verses use the similitude of a welcome guest.

There are nearly 500 references to sheep and shepherds in the Bible. The familiarity of the ancients with a good shepherd's attitudes and work, as well as the nature and needs of sheep, have made this a favorite illustration of the Lord's care for his people. It becomes especially meaningful in the person of Jesus. He is "the good Shepherd" (John 10:11), "the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet. 2:25), "the chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. 5:4), and "that great Shepherd of the sheep" (Heb. 13:20).

From the Shepherd Psalm we are reminded of the Lord's pastoral care. **There is:**

1. **Leadership and companionship.** It is tragic that so many who have sought comfort in this psalm have failed to see that having the Lord as one's Shepherd means following him in the paths of righteousness. (See John 10:4, 5, 27.) But he who leads is also a close companion — "thou art with me."

2. **Contentment and peace.** Needs are supplied, even in abundance. There is no sparseness in the Lord's green pastures. Still waters suggest peace and tranquility.

3. **Confidence and optimism.** Even the valley of the shadow of death does not shake the confidence of the believer who walks by the side of the Lord. We have often suggested that no greater statement of optimism can be found than the words of verse 6. Whatever changes the future may bring, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

4. **Protection and courage.** The world may rely on its locks and weapons. But there is no foe to fear when we are comforted by the rod and staff of the Lord. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.' " (Hebrews 13:5, 6.)

5. **Providence and favor.** Our gracious Host spreads a table that even impresses our enemies. We rejoice not only with the way he provides for our needs, but also with the great generosity with which he shows his favor. The weary traveler is anointed with oil and the cup is filled to overflowing. The Lord never serves a half-filled cup!

6. **Life and hope.** Many live without life. (See 1 Tim. 5:6.) Jesus the good Shepherd, came to give abundant life. (John 10:10.) "He restoreth my soul." The goodness and mercy of the Lord make it possible for us to dwell in his house forever.

Here, then, is a capsule of the assurances of God. In a sublime poetic movement, the singing king rehearses the Lord's care for his people — both for body and soul, both for time and eternity.

This is a psalm of **praise**. Everything points to the Lord. All that is done is done by him. The writer's aim is to extol his goodness.

It is a psalm of **need**. David cannot forget the natural needs and fears of mankind. It is the fact of humanity's fears and frustrations that emphasizes the preciousness of the Shepherd's care.

And it is a psalm of **comfort**. When the needs and fears of the sheep are met by the strength and goodness of the Shepherd, the result must be consolation, joy and peace.

A dreadful irony exists in today's world as people seek satisfaction and comfort in numerous ways, but ignore the One who can supply every need. There is more wisdom, more sensible direction, and better psychology in this six-verse psalm than there is in all the tomes men have ever written. But the world chooses to wander without a Shepherd. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion

on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." (Matt. 9:36.)

There is an old story about a great banquet in London to honor one of England's most renowned actors. Near the end of the banquet the actor was asked to recite one of his favorite poems. He agreed on the condition that an aged minister who was seated near him would also recite the same thing. The actor chose the twenty-third Psalm. When his rendition was finished there was a great burst of applause.

Then the old minister arose, his voice

quivering from age and emotion, to do as the actor had asked and quote the Shepherd Psalm. But when he had finished, there was no applause, not even a sound, but there were tears on the cheeks of many. Finally the actor stood again. "There is a reason for your silence now," he said. "I know the Psalm, but this good man knows the Shepherd!"

It is a good thing, a comforting thing, to know this psalm. But the true meaning of the Shepherd Psalm can be known only by those who first come to know the Shepherd.

---

## Psalm 90

**Jim Gardner, Winston-Salem, N.C.**

The opening verses of Psalm 90 are one of the most solemn and impressive descriptions of the majesty of God in the Bible. We believe the psalm to have been written by Moses, and, if so, it demonstrates that the fundamental truths of the nature of God and man have not changed through the centuries. Fifteen hundred years before Paul preached to the Athenians that "in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28); Moses declared, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Long before God told Malachi, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6); Moses knew that "even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

As God has not changed, man has not changed. From Moses to Isaiah to James, the lawgiver, the prophet, and the apostle have somberly recorded that "all flesh is grass." In our own time, with all the advancements and discoveries of modern medicine, still, "the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow." All the genius of science and all the wealth of civilization have not prevented the day when a man must "go to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" (Eccl. 12:5). The cause of death and sorrow remains the same. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death

by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12.) We may hide our sins from our fellow human beings and arrogantly demand our rights from each other; but every circumstance of our guilt is laid bare before God, and to him we must plead for mercy, not justice. "Thou has set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance."

Because of God's great power and man's great need, Moses made the last part of his psalm a petition for grace. Life may be "of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1), but it does not have to be pointless and empty. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." If, as the Greek playwright Aeschylus wrote, "through sorrow comes learning"; if "blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4); if "sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better"; then "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:10). No servant of God ever suffered permanent loss by obeying his master. "My son, despise thou not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." The punishments of God are

gifts to call us home. The malice of Satan and his human agents cannot harm us. When the Jews stoned Stephen, they only hurried him into the joy of his Lord.

As Christians, we ought to remember and be encouraged by the glory "which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). Moses, living before Christ "brought life and immortality to light" (2 Tim. 1:10), humbly prayed, "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." In the gospel, we have confidence "that the sufferings of this present

time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). Moses asked, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." We know that "when he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). Moses prayed, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us." We have received the assurance, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). What might otherwise be a threat is now the sweetest promise: "We fly away."

## Psalm 100: A Call To Worship

**Jerry Senn, Greer, S.C.**

It is time for worship services to begin. All is silent. Any movement brings a quick, icy glance of disapproval. Parents pray their children will not violate the fragile atmosphere. The mood is too well known, and even ingrained within us, to need more description. It is as if we were attending the funeral of a cherished friend and to pay our final respects, we offer silence as a fitting expression of our sorrow.

Silence can be a profound and meaningful expression of our love and reverence for God. But gloomy moods of a funeral may display a totally misguided concept of what God desires of His people.

In the book, **Exploring the Old Testament**, edited by W.T. Purkiser, commenting on the use made by the Jews of Psalm 100, we read: "The worship services usually began with processional hymns at the foot of Mount Moriah, upon which the Temple stood. As the worshipping pilgrims climbed the hill to the Temple the choir broke out in song:

*'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*

*Serve the Lord with gladness:  
Come before his presence with singing.*

*Know ye that the Lord is God:  
It is he that made us, and not we ourselves.*

*We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

*Enter into his gates with thanksgiving  
And into his courts with praise:*

*Be thankful unto him, and bless his name  
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting*

*And his truth endureth to all generations.' "* (Psalm 100.)

Kyle M. Yates remarks, "No psalm is used more frequently in synagogue or in church. It is God's word to the inner heart of man calling for praise and thanksgiving and joyous service. There is not one single mournful note in the entire psalm. The psalmist praises God from beginning to end and calls on the earth to join him in praise and thanksgiving and adoration. He is so happy that he must have others join him in the praises."

Psalm 100 is obviously an expression of jubilation and speaks eloquently of the attitude which should fill every heart as we assemble for worship to our God or go about to serve him. Such a spirit would transform our periods of worship. We need this psalm. Let us now examine it more

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"Make a joyful noise. . . ." This phrase may be translated "shout unto the Lord" as in Psalm 98:4 and 95:1, 2. "The figure is that of a crowd of loyal subjects expressing their awakened emotions as their king walks before them. Our God inspires happy, cheerful worship." (Kyle M. Yates.) David is saying, "make noise" or "express outwardly your inner joy." The outward expression is to be made "unto God," not man. It is worthy of note that the whole psalm places emphasis upon God, not man. Thirteen times in these five brief verses personal references to God are found. God hears the melody of the joyful heart but He also desires that we allow joy to break forth from our lips in a personal indication of emotion. Someone says, "I can't make a joyful noise, so I keep quiet." The joyful noise may not be joyful to the ears of man, but must express an inner joy. If a Christian does not express joy outwardly, it is perhaps because there is none there to express. Human beings express their joy on many occasions, why not shout out our feelings for God?

"Serve the Lord with gladness. . . ." Worship to God is service. But the sense is, serve the Lord in whatever manner, with a glad heart. This word, gladness, means "glee, mirth, pleasure or rejoicing." How this contrasts with the spirit of gloom and dullness with which we often come before God! Look into the face of the person next to you in worship. Is there gladness in that face? Are we more concerned that our services be done "decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40) than we are that they be in the proper "spirit" (John 4:24)? God is not dead! He ought to live in our hearts so as to make our attitudes reflect His radiance and even possess a "gleeful" heart. "Why should we be so selfish and self-centered that we stifle every breath of praise before it is half grown? We who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and have Him constantly in our hearts and lives have more cause for rejoicing and singing than all the Old Testament saints put together." (Kyle M. Yates.)

"Come before his presence with singing. . . ." "Christianity has always been

carried on the wings of song. A good answer to instrumental music is outstanding vocal singing! Our singing reflects us — great churches sing! Dead churches just go through the motions." (Charles Hodge.) James said, "Is any cheerful, let him sing praise." The word "sing," as used by the psalmist, comes from the same root as "shout for joy" in verse 1 and is usually related to a triumphal cry in a joyful voice.

"Know ye that the Lord is God. . . ." Our awareness of who God is determines the genuineness of our worship. We can become so much aware of ourselves that we forget God. David speaks of God as (1) Maker, (2) King and (3) Shepherd. The sobering implications of each of these aspects of God is overwhelming to a true Christian! How confident are we that the Lord is God? It will drive us to our knees!

"Enter with . . . thanksgiving . . . praise . . . and bless his name. . . ." David seems to be speaking of public worship in the temple because he uses the words "courts" and "gates." The general application isn't confined to that but the three essentials of all acceptable worship are given. They are (1) Thanksgiving, (2) Praise, and (3) Blessing (adoration). If anything is evident in this psalm it is that worship, to a large degree, is but an expression of our true emotions to God. Empty Christians cannot provide worship that is acceptable to God. That, my friend, is totally impossible! It is absolutely essential that our worship be expressive of these three holy emotions. We had just as well subtract one of the acts of worship as to subtract the proper spirit. We cannot fake it! Deadness in worship results when we are not "thankful." Paul said, "In everything give thanks." (1 Thess. 5:18.) The early church spent a lot of time "praising God." (Acts 2:47.) "Praise comes from the root word which means "to make a show, to boast; and thus to be (clamorously) foolish; to rave." (Strong.) It is most generally expressed in hymns or poetic words which speak of God in every conceivable way so as to commend and describe his glory and goodness. It is boasting about God's many attributes. Humans cannot overdo this! There are too many mute Christians who have never opened their



mouths and lifted their voices to express heartfelt love for a loving God.

The motives for such worship are set out by David in simple but powerful fashion. (1) He is good. Jesus said, there is none good save God. His goodness is total. (2) His mercy never ceases, coming forth like a river from that inexhaustible spring — his loving heart. That mercy is completely undeserved by us. (3) His truth (faithfulness) endures and constantly reassures frail

humans.

Man is closest to God in worship. His acceptance of our worship is largely a matter of our attitude. A call to worship based on any other standard will result in (1) God's turning away in total rejection, and (2) our being bored and unfulfilled in our efforts to serve him.

Let us allow his love to so fill our souls that we respond to him with a "joyful noise."

---

## Psalm 139

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.**

Within the poetry of Psalm 139 we find a magnificent statement of the omniscience and omnipresence of God and their awe-inspiring effect upon the believer. God's complete knowledge and presence are the predominant ideas of the psalm. It consists of 24 verses with four balanced paragraphs of six verses each. The first paragraph, verses 1-6, acknowledges God's complete understanding of the psalmist (omniscience). Verse 7-12 comprise the second paragraph and speak of the ever-presence of God. In the third paragraph, verses 13-18, the recognition of the perfect knowledge of God gives rise to a profound sense of awe in the psalmist. The fourth paragraph, verses 19-24, present God as the perfect Judge.

### Commentary

The psalm begins with an acknowledgment of God's complete knowledge of the poet. "Searched" is from a verb that originally meant to dig, to search out precious metals. Here it is used metaphorically to refer to God's ability to discern the thoughts of the poet. The phrase "My downsitting and mine uprising" declare that God knows all of the psalmist's activities. God even knows his thoughts (12b). So thorough is the Lord's understanding of his activities that the psalmist can only exclaim "Thou . . . art acquainted with all my ways." The gist of this first paragraph is that God knows the poet better than he knows himself. The con-

templation of such perfect knowledge overwhelms him. Filled with awe, he can only confess his inability to comprehend the infinite mind of God, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it."

In the second paragraph the thought immediately changes to a consideration of God's presence. This section is filled with opposites that emphasize the impossibility of escaping the Lord's inspection. Heaven and Sheol (verse 8) are opposites in relation to space, heaven representing height and Sheol depth. Even if he were to fly to the most remote regions of the earth, still the psalmist could not escape the divine presence, for "even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." This statement indicates that he finds comfort and assurance in God's presence. Not even light or darkness can separate one from the presence of the Creator. Thus, the answer to the question of verse 7, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" is there is no escape from God's careful scrutiny. In this reality the omniscience and omnipresence of God are vitally and inseparably linked.

The third paragraph begins with a description of God's magnificent handiwork, "For thou didst form my inward parts: thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: wonderful are thy works . . . My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the

earth." The English translation "curiously wrought" is from a Hebrew verb which literally means to embroider. Indeed, man is the handiwork of a most skillful Weaver. With this description of God's marvelous work the psalmist seems to be saying, "And why shouldn't God know me so thoroughly? After all, He is the one who made me." "The lowest parts of the earth" is to be understood as an idiomatic expression for the darkness of the womb. Even in the depths of his mother's womb the poet is not hidden from God's all-seeing eye. The Lord's omniscience is such that he knew the number of days the psalmist would live before even one of them had passed. The poet is clearly impressed by that fact, for he confesses "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" God's knowledge is simply incomprehensible. We, like the poet, can only respond in awe as we contemplate the vastness and thoroughness of divine knowledge.

With its appeal to God's judgment, the final paragraph at first appears to have no logical place in a discussion of God's omniscience and omnipresence, but upon further reflection the purpose of the appeal becomes clear. The psalmist desires to be right with God, so he yields to his judgment, judgment which is based upon the Lord's perfect knowledge. Verses 19-22, which speak of a desire to see the wicked slain and of hatred of the wicked, are to be understood as an expression of the poet's refusal to commune with the enemies of God. In view of that refusal he appeals to God's omniscience in order to be sure that his intentions and feelings toward the wicked are not improperly motivated. He appears to be saying, "Search me and know me, O God, so that I might know myself." The psalm closes with a plea for God to lead the poet in a way which leads to life everlasting.

### A Relevant Message

As the thoughtful individual carefully considers this wonderful psalm, it becomes clear that it carries a message that is immensely relevant to today's believer. Have we today comprehended the implications of God's omniscience and omnipresence for

our lives as we live them? As we become conscious of the fact that God knows us completely and that we cannot escape his presence, we are more careful of the kind of lives we live. When we are tempted to sin, we might think twice if we consider that at every moment God is there and is watching. Thus, the omniscience and omnipresence of the Father serve as a restraining influence. Furthermore, these two attributes of God serve as a source of comfort for the believer. No matter where we are or what happens, we find assurance in God's presence and knowledge of us.

One cannot help but be impressed by the high view of God that is evident in all of the Psalms, and Psalm 139 is no exception. The psalmist could only stand incredulous before the realities of God's omniscience and omnipresence. The vastness of divine knowledge and the range of the divine presence are indeed beyond our feeble comprehension, and we can only kneel before Almighty God, humbled and filled with wonderment as we consider his omniscience and omnipresence. He knows each of us completely and we cannot escape his presence.

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### Biographical Sketch



**Charlie Harrison, Jr.**

Charlie Harrison, Jr., is a native of Florence, Alabama. He was educated in the public schools of Florence, Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee, and David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee. Charlie was awarded the B.A.

degree by Lipscomb in 1975.

The twenty-eight-year-old evangelist began his work with the church in Williamston, South Carolina, in September, 1980. Prior to this, Harrison had been engaged in secular employment.

### Sermon

## Dying To Sin

**Charlie Harrison, Jr.,  
Williamston, S.C.**

**THESIS:** To show what is involved in dying to sin and that dying to sin is life to God.

**TEXT:** Galatians 2:19-20: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

(1) The letter to the church at Galatia was prompted by Jewish Christians who were insisting that Gentile converts submit to the law of Moses. (2) Paul explained to the Galatians that they were Christians and should not be bound to the law. (3) This les-

son will show what is involved in dying to sin and some advantages of living for Christ.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

I. The old law of works was imperfect.

A. The law could not give life or righteousness (Gal. 3:21). (1) One was confined under the law (Gal. 3:23). (2) Christ's crucifixion fulfilled the law (Matt. 5:17).

B. The function of the law was to bring one to Christ (Gal. 3:24). (1) Christ's crucifixion made the law void (Gal. 3:1-5). (2) All authority was given to him (Matt. 28:18). (3) Christ established his law of faith as opposed to a law of works (Gal. 3:15; 10:14).

C. Applications: (1) Man lives either for sin and Satan or for God. (2) When a man is converted, he dies to sin. (3) Man is freed from sin to live for Christ.

II. Eternal life is in Christ (Acts 4:12).

A. One is freed from sin in Christ (Rom. 8:1, 2). (1) Sin does not govern the life of a Christian (Rom. 6:4). (2) Christ sacrificed himself for us (Titus 2:14).

B. Christians live for Christ, not themselves. (1) Because, Christ died for the Christian (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). (2) Christians imitate Christ's sacrificial life (Eph. 5:1, 2). (3) Note the example of Paul's sacrifice for Christ (2 Cor. 4:8-10).

C. Applications: (1) One imitates Christ in living for him. (2) One must be willing to sacrifice for Christ (Eph. 6:10-20).

III. The new birth as found in the New Testament:

A. The new birth involves a full surrender (Rom. 12:1, 2). (1) One must consider himself dead to sin (Rom. 6:11). (2) One must consider himself alive to God in Christ (Rom. 6:11).

B. The new birth involves following God's plan for man's salvation (Heb. 5:9): (1) Hear (Rom. 10:17). (2) Believe (Mark 16:15, 16). (3) Repent (Acts 2:38). (4) Con-



fess (Mt. 10:32, 33). (5) Be baptized (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21).

C. God will render to all men according to their works (Rom. 2:6, 7). (1) Salvation is promised to those who are obedient (Mark 16:15, 16). (2) Christ will give eternal life to

his sheep (John 10:27, 28). (3) Those who do not know God will be punished with eternal fire (Matt. 25:46).

CONCLUSION: (1) Salvation involves a death to sin. (2) God offers salvation freely to all who obey.



# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## On Foreign Soil:

**Ghana:** It is reported that during the period from June, 1979, to August, 1980, the church in Ghana saw tremendous growth with most of the local congregations doubling in membership and attendance. A campaign last August resulted in 745 baptisms and 100 restorations and at least two new churches started.

**Papua New Guinea:** It was reported some months ago in this column that there was fighting in some of the remote regions of Papua New Guinea. Ray Lock, a missionary there, recently reported that there has been a great deal of fighting around Waipi which has left two of our Christian brothers dead. The fear of more killings has left the church in that area of the country in poor condition, but many of the Christians there have overcome their fear and are once again assembling for worship.

**Singapore:** No doubt one of the most dynamic churches in our fellowship is the Moulmein Road congregation in Singapore. Some of the goals set by the church are: (1) to fully support ten missionaries; (2) 500 faithful members; (3) print millions of books and tracts; (4) produce radio and television programs to be broadcast throughout Asia; and (5) send teams of soul winners to other countries. It is hoped that each of these goals will be accomplished by 1985. The Moulmein Road church presently provides full support for six people and conducts a gospel meeting every month. During the first nine months of 1980 there were 55 baptized into Christ. These are only a few of the goals and accomplishments of this remarkable church. Gordon Hogan,

who has spent 20 years working for the Lord in Singapore, is the minister for the church.

## At Home:

**Nashville, Tennessee:** The Radnor church of Christ is overseeing a revolutionary and effective new work in this city of a half million people. The Inner City Ministry is an effort to reach the children and adults of Nashville's crime-ridden poverty area. This effort is not a bus ministry as such. Instead of busing the children out of their own neighborhoods to the middle class churches, arrangements were made to rent Cameron School, located in the inner city, and use it as a base of operations. Young people and parents are taken there where they attend worship and Bible classes. Bible classes are taught throughout the week. The program has begun to change the complexion of the inner city and has the full endorsement of Mayor Richard Fulton. Attendance at the worship services is averaging 913 and more than 80 have been converted to date. To our knowledge, this is the only ministry of its kind among churches of Christ. The effort is very capably directed by Lytle Thomas under the oversight of the Radnor elders.

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# Death Is Coming

The last enemy of man is still at large. It is stalking through the land with devastating force. And sooner or later we must all fall victim to it (unless we are living when the Lord comes again, and even then we will undergo a change similar to death).

It seems that most of us have a deep aversion to thinking about death, but that will not prevent its coming. It is as certain as life itself. Or as Longfellow put in in his **A Psalm of Life:**

*Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and  
brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.*

The Bible says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27.) There is no escape from the fact: death is coming — coming to all of us.

When Peter wrote of the end of the present order of things, he concluded, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) In view of approaching death, what manner of persons ought we to be? Should we not prepare for it . . . and prepare for it now? Far too many of us live under the delusion that we can prepare for death in the last few hours, or even minutes, of life. Thus we postpone our preparation. But this is extremely dangerous. It is saying in essence that we want to live in a way in which we are not willing to die. But this is deceptive. If one wants to die the death of the righteous he must live the life of the righteous. One cannot live one way and die another. The whole history of man teaches us this.

Those who wait to prepare for death usually wait too long. Many years ago we heard Alvin Barry, in preaching a funeral, tell of a legend in which a man made a covenant with death. In the covenant, death

agreed that it would not come for the man until it had first sent a messenger well in advance to warn him of its approach. But one day death suddenly appeared and caught the man by complete surprise. He protested that death had not kept its promise. "Why did you not send your messenger as we bargained?" he asked. "I did send a messenger," replied death. "I sent several messengers, in fact. Look at your hair: it was once black, but now it has turned to silver. Your face has become wrinkled; your eyes are dim; your hearing is impaired; you have lost your teeth, and your form has become stooped. What are these but the messengers of death?"

We were reminded of this some years ago when we were in Georgia for a meeting, with our grand, great, and esteemed brother, Milton S. Parker. During the meeting brother Parker relived many delightful experiences of his long and useful preaching ministry. But the thing that stands out so vividly in our mind is the fact that he played for us a sermon he had preached in Woodruff, S.C., the previous fall, while he was in a meeting there. It was based on Paul's words to Timothy, "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim. 4:21). He called the sermon, "Come Before Winter." In it he let "winter" represent death, and "come before winter" opportunities. Thus "come before winter" meant to accept your opportunities before it was too late — do what you are going to do before death comes. It was a beautiful sermon on the urgency of doing God's will now, and on the certainty of losing our opportunities if we do not. Death is coming and we must do what we are going to do before its arrival.

Although death does come suddenly and without warning to many, to most of us it gives numerous warnings (as in the legend cited above). We have long thought of our own age as the age which determines the end of youth (and that end gets higher with

each passing year), but we cannot ignore the fact that, even while we write these lines, our hair is streaking with gray; for many years we have had to aid our weakening eyes with glasses; wrinkles are forming on the neck and face; the body is gradually stooping worse; we totter more as we walk (the opening in doors are increasingly harder to hit and objects keep getting in our way); this will probably be the year we will have to buy a whole new set of teeth; the body is also rebelling against the twelve to fifteen hours we have always worked each day, seven days a week; we have had to call

a halt to some of the activities in which we have previously engaged; we are forced to turn down invitations we would have gladly accepted in former days; driving, especially long distance, has become a burden instead of an adventure; sleep is interrupted by more and longer periods of wakefulness; more ailments appear that require medical attention. But in all this we are not alone. All our friends, who are near the same age, are experiencing the same, some to a lesser and some to a greater degree. They are all messengers to inform us that death is coming. Are we ready for it? If not, why?

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# Thou Shalt Worship The Lord Thy God

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

Jesus said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10.) Man's greatest **privilege** is to worship the Sovereign Creator of the universe. No other earthly experience can equal worship. For the freedom to worship men have fought and died. It would be a thrilling privilege to meet the world's greatest musician, artist, or statesman, how much more to come into the presence of the great Jehovah.

Man's greatest **need** is to have communion and fellowship with God and that is precisely the purpose of worship. Despair and darkness hang heavy upon the human heart that is separated from God because of sin and guilt (Isa. 59:1-2). In acceptable worship, man, the sinner, is allowed to approach the loving Father and receive a blessing (Luke 15:11-24). In Lord's day worship we remember Christ's death for us in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-28), that is a communion, a participation with the Lord (1 Cor. 10:16). In our songs and prayers we are conversing with God (Psa.

34:1-6). Man without God in his life is like a body without a spirit (James 2:26). But man in his proper worshipping relationship to God enjoys the abundant life (John 10:10).

Man's greatest **responsibility** is to worship God in an acceptable fashion. Jesus reminded the woman at the well that God seeks true worshippers who will worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23, 24). It is not enough to worship only. Our worship must be according to the will of the Father to be beneficial (Matt. 7:21). In a day when numerous religions clamor for our interest; all of which profess to worship God, the wise person will look to the Scriptures to verify that he is indeed serving God as per his instructions (Acts 17:11).

Man's greatest **hope** is to live with God in eternity, which is the promised reward of faithful worshippers. In Revelation, chapter 7, John foresaw the redeemed of all nations in heaven, worshipping God (Rev. 7:5-11). If we want to be with the saved in that grand and glorious worship assembly, then surely we must be among his worshippers now.



# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Statesville.** The Abilene church is now sponsoring "A Minute for the Master" on two Statesville radio stations. Johnny Melton will be the speaker.

**Hickory.** A new congregation is now meeting at 1010 Old Lenoir Road. Frank Maynard is the preacher. The congregation is being designated as the West Hickory church of Christ.

The Fairgrove Church Road congregation has a new mailing address: Route 2, Box 78, Conover, NC 28613.

**Raleigh.** Clayton Mitchell and David Riggs are now working fulltime with Brooks Avenue.

**Jacksonville.** Ken Taylor has been added to the eldership.

**Salisbury.** Olian Holladay has been added to the eldership at West Innes Street church. Also they have appointed two additional deacons.

**Wilmington.** A bulletin from the prison ministry in Raytown, Mo., tells of good progress among prisoners in Wilmington. There have been seven baptized at the Pine Valley Pre-Release Center.

**Winston-Salem.** A new radio program has been scheduled by Linville Forest, 9:00 on Sundays over WMSX.

**Charlotte.** Providence Road has decided to enlarge their facilities from their present 400 person capacity to 1050.

## N.C. Baptisms

Helen St., Fayetteville, 1; Wilkesboro, 5;

Raleigh, 2; Burlington, 2; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; Northview, Statesville, 1; Jacksonville, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 1; West Innes, Salisbury, 1; Linville Forest, Winston-Salem, 4; Providence Road, Charlotte, 6; Elizabeth City, 1. Total: 26.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Greer.** Gray Flippen and his family are now associated with the Greer congregation. Gray is recovering from serious illness. Their new address is P.O. Box 62, Fairforest, SC 29336. Phone: 803 — 576-1280.

**Columbia.** Bob Brandon will be going on a six-week preaching tour in Thailand beginning February 15.

**West Columbia.** Dennis Johnson will be working in India for a month beginning in February.

## S.C. Baptisms

St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 2; Greenwood, 1; West Columbia, 1; Union, 1; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Shandon, Columbia, 4; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 1; Total: 11.

## Greenville, Ray Road

**JERRY R. WILSON, Reporting:** This congregation met for the first time in the home of a member, on Sunday evening, March 9, 1980, with an attendance of 43. We are now meeting in the Ruritan Club building on Hwy. 25 south, between Moonville and Woodmont. We have purchased 6.5 acres of land on Ray Road with plans for a building in the near future. There were four who were baptized into Christ in 1980, after learning of the Lord's church for the first time, and one was restored. We are

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### North Carolina

Kannapolis, David Pharr ..... March 1-6  
 Providence Rd., Charlotte, Youth Advance ..... March 13-15  
 Helen St., Fayetteville, Thomas Eaves ..... March 15-20  
 Abilene, Statesville, David Pharr ..... March 22-25

### South Carolina

Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, Freed-Hardeman Chorus ..... March 15

now looking for a minister to work with us in building up the church in this area.

## THE MICROCOMPUTER GOES TO CHURCH

Bob West, author of computerized Bible education programs, has accepted a dealership with Commodore Business Machines, manufacturer of PET and CBM computers, and Zeigler Electronic Products. His company will act as a clearing house for com-

puter Bible learning programs and other software which will help churches do their work. Some immediate applications include Membership and Contribution Records, General Ledger Accounting, Payroll, Word Processing, Mailing Lists, and Bible Education. Bob will gladly send you a free packet of information on what's available now, and then keep you posted on new developments. Write to: Church Computer, Bob West Publications, 34 West Main, Brevard, NC 28712.

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# A Look At Books

### Johnny Melton, Statesville, N.C.

**The Dew Breakers**, Dow Merritt; J.C. Choate Publications, Burton Drive, Winona, Mississippi 38967; 240 pages, cloth, \$8.00.

**The Dew Breakers** is a charming book written by a veteran missionary. Dow Merritt tells the bittersweet story of the experience of his family as missionaries for more than forty years on the continent of Africa. Brother Merritt tells of his work with the natives of Northern Rhodesia (now the Republic of Zambia). This book is not written as an appeal for others to go to Africa. Nor does it seek to produce guilt in those who have never been involved in mission work. It is a pleasant book that relates the faith and dedication of a group of Christians. However, in their story there is motivation for getting involved. **The Dew Breakers** will bring a smile to your lips, a tear to your eye, a lump to your throat, and a desire to serve to your heart. Read it.

**Girls, Girls, Girls**, Ferrell K. Hill; J.C. Choate Publications; 109 pages, paper, \$3.00.

The lessons in this book are comprised of articles which first appeared in **The World Evangelist**. Sister Hill has conducted a regular column for young women in **The World Evangelist** since its inception in 1972. She is attempting to fulfill the Pauline admonition to older women, "That they may teach the young women. . . ." (Titus 2:4.) Each chapter is composed of an

hodge-podge of material which ought to create stimulating discussion in a classroom setting.

**A Favourable Life**, Joyce Dunavan has written this short book for use in a Ladies' Bible Class. It has been conveniently divided into eleven lessons, one group discussion and a review test; making it suitable for a one-quarter study. The author states, "The entire goal of this book is that it would help us all to be found favorable in the sight of God. Whether you are a working girl, a mother, grandmother, or widow, this book is written for you."

**Fighting the Good Fight of Faith**, John Waddey; J.C. Choate Publications; 176 pages, cloth, \$6.00.

This is a compilation of articles, sermons and letters John Waddey has written, preached and mailed over the past few years. The author writes, "The various lessons have one thing in common, that is, they all relate in one way or another to the moral crisis in America. They are one Christian's response to these grave problems." Much of the material deals with the abortion problem. Brother Waddey has been involved in the leadership of the Right to Life Movement since 1974. He tackles other moral issues of our day: Homosexuality, Pornography, Divorce and Remarriage, Family Planning, Women's Liberation, and Sex and Violence on T.V. After reading this book one ought to be motivated to get more involved in "fighting the good fight of faith."

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SAMPLE

**Advance Notice:**

We encourage You to make plans now to attend the Youth advance of 1981—a great opportunity for encouragement and fellowship. Our focus is on Victory in Jesus in every part of life.

If it's the Lord's will, Wayne Kilpatrick & Joe Beam of Alabama, Jack Exum of Georgia & others will speak Friday, March 13 through Sunday, March 15, 1981. In addition, the Alabama Christian College Chorus, Lighthouse from A.C.C. and Freed-Hardeman Chorus will join us as we celebrate our Victory In Jesus.

There will also be a Marriage Seminar, led by Bob Rigdon, for the adults attending on Saturday, March 14.

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Wayne Kilpatrick  
Jack Exum  
Joe Beam

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& Lighthouse

March 13-15  
Charlotte, NC

For more details,  
contact: Jim Rice.

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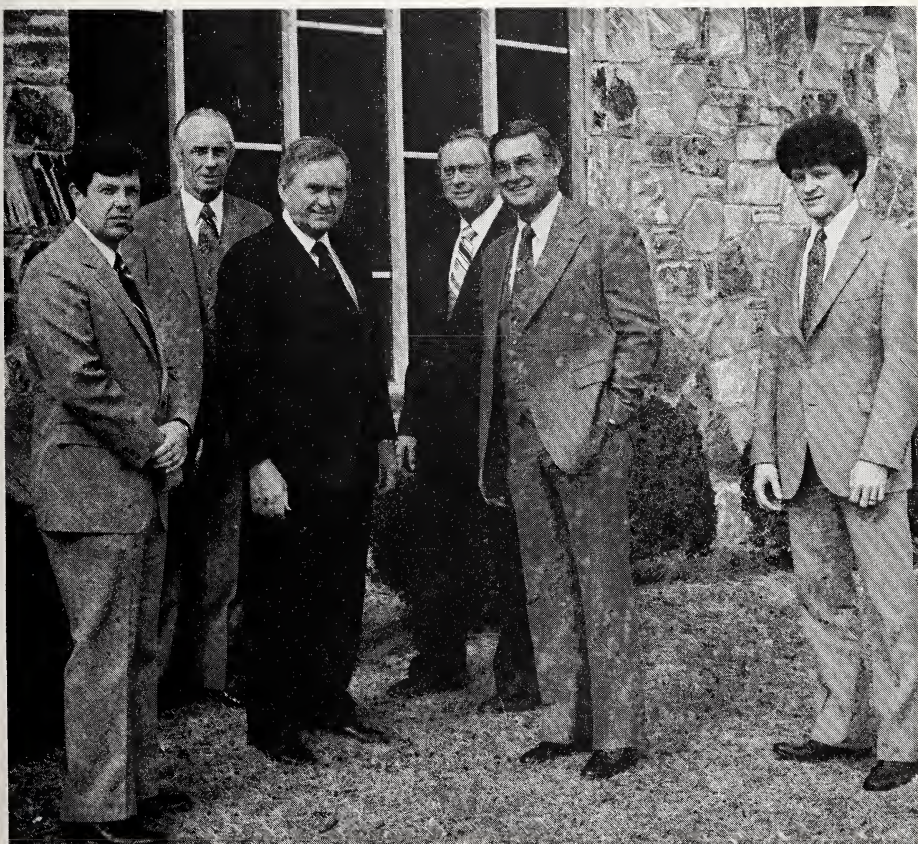


# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 3, MARCH 1981



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Elders and Preachers — Central Church  
In Spartanburg, Site of the 1981  
Carolina Lectures — See Pages 10 & 11

# EDITORIAL

## THE CAROLINA LECTURES

Elsewhere in this issue we are carrying information pertaining to the Carolina Lectures. The Central church in Spartanburg is serving as the gracious host this year, and it (along with its learned and powerful preacher, James Meadows) has planned a marvelous program — one that should be of tremendous interest to every Christian the world over. "Difficult Text of the Bible" will be dealt with by a host of preachers from all over the Carolinas. This promises to be one of the most challenging and mind-expanding and faith-building programs in the long history of the lectures. We therefore urge brethren to flock into Spartanburg April 6-9 in unprecedented numbers to enjoy and profit from this grandest of all events in the Carolinas. The speakers will be well prepared, the lectures will be great, and the fellowship will be heavenly. How could anyone afford to miss it? We certainly plan to be there. Do you?

## MIND-BOGGLING

In Stanley Ayling's biography of John Wesley, simply called **John Wesley**, he tells of a lady who asked Wesley a question about hothouses and flower gardens. Wesley judged that both were innocent "because neither of them is forbidden in Scripture." He then adds, "It is sinful to condemn anything which Scripture does not condemn." Mr. Ayling comments, "Taken literally, this is mind-boggling in its implications, but at least seems to turn Scriptural tables against the Puritan lunatic fringe."

Maybe so, but if Mr. Ayling wants a really mind-boggling concept let him consider the principle upon which the restoration plea is built, namely, "It is sinful to practice (in matters pertaining to religion) that which the Scriptures do not teach." But as mind-boggling as its implications are this is precisely what the Scriptures themselves teach about the matter. Paul said, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21.) This simply means that if a thing cannot be proven (by the Scriptures),

it cannot be practiced. If one holds fast only proven things, then it necessarily follows that he must reject everything not proven. The Scriptures therefore teach: prove all things; hold fast only that which is proven.

But that is not all. That there is absolutely no misunderstanding of the principle, Paul states it yet another way. He says, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Col. 3:17.) To do a thing in the name of Christ is to do it by His authority. Hence all things are to be done because they are authorized by Christ. Unauthorized things cannot be done in His name. Thus only Scriptural things (things taught in the Scriptures) can be done in the name of Christ.

The principle "it is sinful to practice (in matters pertaining to religion) that which the Scriptures do not teach" is a Scriptural one — one that Christians are obliged to follow, if they are true to the Scriptures. And that is mind-boggling in its implications. Taken literally it turns the Scriptural tables against the whole denominational world and sends us all back to the Bible for everything we believe we do in the service of God.

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Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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## WHEN "YES" MEANS "NO"

We lift the following from **The Bulletin** published by the West Columbia church and edited by Dennis Johnson, the local preacher. It is delightful . . . and right to the point. Unfortunately brother Johnson did not know the author. Neither do we. But we are happy to share it with our readers.

It is the habit of many American Indians to say "yes" to everything they are asked to do. This leads to confusion as to when an Indian means "yes" and when he means "no." Each year there is a meeting of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. At the meeting in 1952 the question was brought up on the floor of the assembly. "When does an Indian mean 'no!'?"

An elderly Indian with bronzed and wrinkled face arose and in a deep voice stated, "It is plain when Indian mean 'no!' When Indian say 'yes' and do nothing, then Indian mean 'no!' "

It occurs to me that the Indian is not the only person plagued with the problem of speaking with a "forked tongue." Many alleged "Christians" have the same problem. Thousands of people in our country, somewhere in life, insist they have said "yes" to God. They have committed their lives to Him and sing with gusto: "I'll go where you want me to go, Dear Lord! I'll do what you want me to do." But when the Lord says, "Repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38), the "yes" suddenly becomes "no."

When the Lord requires, "Don't forsake the assembly" (Heb. 10:25), the bold "yes" changes to an argumentative "no!" When the Lord commands, "Keep unspotted from the world" (James 1:27), and "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22), the dynamic "yes" becomes a timid "no." When the Lord urges, "Give as you are prospered" (1 Cor. 16:2), the "Yes, dear Lord," becomes, "I'm sorry, Lord, but no."

Many a church leader's bold "yes" to the call of service has melted to a puny whimpering "no" in the face of opposition. The elders' "yes, Lord, we'll feed the flock and discipline the disorderly" (Acts 20:28; 2 Thess. 3:6), has wilted into a weak, "No, Lord, there are too many problems; surely

you understand."

The preachers' "Yes, Lord, we'll preach the word, and reprove, rebuke and exhort without fear and favor" (2 Tim. 4:2), has paled to "No, Lord, they'll not stand for it; the world is so much with them . . . and, Lord, you know I have a family to support."

God save us from anemic discipleship.

## THE CURSE OF DRUNKENNESS

"How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee." (1 Sam. 1:14.) These sober words were spoken by Eli to Hannah, the soon-to-be-mother of Samuel, whom he erroneously concluded, because of her unusual behavior, to be intoxicated with strong drink. While Hannah was not drunk, the words spoken erroneously to her will most certainly apply to all who do drink. America has become a nation of drinkers — a nation which thinks it can drown all its troubles in wine. And unfortunately many in the Lord's church have embraced this philosophy. But not so. In fact, the very opposite is true. Wherever there is drinking a severe curse and tragic consequence inevitably follow. To see the seriousness of the problem facing us, consider the following statistics from the United Tennessee League:

1. Seventy-one percent of those above the age of 14 drink.

2. Alcohol is the third leading cause of death (heart disease and cancer are one and two).

3. There are presently 11 million alcoholics in the U.S., and we are increasing that by 1200 per day.

4. Drinking and driving is the number 1 killer of young people today. Suicide is second.

5. The national Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism estimates there are 3.3 million problem drinkers among youth in the 14 to 17 age range.

6. The number of high school students who reported having been drunk increased two and one-half times in the last 12 years.

7. The problem of alcohol cost the American society 61 billion in 1979 (from the American Business Men's Research Foundation).



8. The cost of alcohol problems remain more than \$4.41 for every \$1.00 collected in taxes from beer, wine, and whiskey.

9. The average consumption in Tennessee (15 years and older) of beer is 25 gallons per person.

With these facts before us, surely we are justified in asking, "How long wilt thou be drunken" Americans? How long will you be deceived by wine? (Cf. Prov. 20:1.) What price in human misery are you going to pay before you open your eyes to the tragic consequences of this fleeting and deceptive pleasure? When will you obey

God, who instructs, "Put away thy wine from thee"?

## OUR DEPARTURE

Unfortunately (or fortunately as the case may well be) we have no choice as to when our lives will end. We love life and the Lord has built into us an instinct to preserve it as long as we can. No one (or at least no one known to us) wants to change this. There is a song in some currently used book in which we sing:

*I'd like to stay here longer  
Than man's allotted days  
And watch the fleeting changes  
Of life's uneven ways,  
But if my Savior calls me  
To that sweet home on high,  
I'll live with Him forever  
In glory by and by.*

But as far as we are concerned there is an important qualification to this: we do not want to stay here longer than our work demands. Or in short, when our work is done here below, when we can no longer be active in the Lord's service or make provisions for those we love and are responsible for, if we had a choice we would then like to make our debut on the shores of eternity. John Oxenham expressed our sentiments precisely when he wrote:

*Lord, when Thou seest that my work is done,  
Let me not linger on,  
With failing powers,  
Down the weary hours —  
A workless worker in a world of work.  
But, with a word,  
Just bid me home.  
And I will come  
Right gladly —  
Yes, right gladly  
Will I come.*

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# Withdrawal For Not Being Evangelistic?

David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

It is an indisputable fact that congregations have a Scriptural duty to withdraw from members who "walk disorderly" (2 Thess. 3:6). Specific kinds of misconduct which require withdrawal are named in 1 Corinthians 5:11. Neither should heretics be allowed to continue in fellowship (Titus 3:10). Refusal to be faithful to worship as appointed is disobedience to specific Biblical requirements and is one reason for withdrawal (2 Thess. 3:14; Heb. 10:25).

Withdrawal is always for cases of deliberate rebellion and failure to repent of that rebellion. It should be emphasized that the Bible does not teach withdrawal because of spiritual immaturity or for failure to bear as much fruit as others.

We mention this because of a report that has come to us of another congregation's plans to withdraw from members who are not as involved in evangelism as it is thought they should be. Such action would involve a presumptuous and blatant abuse of Scriptural principles.

We have no argument with emphasizing the need for Christians being personally involved in evangelism. We have always urged, and will continue to urge, brethren to work to win others to Christ. The failure, however, of people to be as active in this as we think they should be is not justification for withdrawal.

Such action would arbitrarily overlook the fact that there are other "fruits" and duties in the Christian life. If a congregation can decide to withdraw from one because he is not involved in evangelism, why not also withdraw from those who are not active in a benevolent program? It is certain that some who seem to be "puffed up" over their success in personal evangelism have done little or nothing in some other areas of the Lord's service.

People have different talents. All are not fine talent people. Some can be more effective in some areas than are others. All are not equal in their ability and personality for evangelism.

Paul said he "labored more abundantly March 1981

than they all" (1 Cor. 15:10); but he did not withdraw from the other apostles because they were not as active as he was.

Further, it must be asked by what measure can it be determined when to withdraw for failure to be evangelistic? Would it be on the basis of how many Bible studies one attends? or how many doors he knocks? or how many baptisms result? or whether he attends evangelistic seminars? Apparently some are ready to set up just such standards. This is arbitrary, inconsistent, foolish and unscriptural.

Attention has also been called to a kind of "backdoor withdrawal" which is sometimes practiced. In this the congregation is not publicly informed of withdrawal action. Instead word is spread through a network of trusted insiders to "withdraw" for a time from a certain person by shunning him. This is supposed to make him feel guilty so that he will either get in line or quit altogether. The elders and/or more mature members may not know that this action is being taken.

We are greatly concerned about the need for Christians being involved in all areas of the church's work; but the answer is not in intimidation, or in guilt motivation, or in contrived withdrawals. It is through teaching and example. It is presumptuous sin to pervert the Divine standards for church discipline.

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*"You can't expect to be a lucky dog  
if you spend all your time growling."*

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# The Riches Of Christ

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.**

At some point in our lives all of us have entertained dreams of possessing wealth immeasurable. Even though we may be content in our present circumstance, yet we cannot but help to wonder what it would be like to be rich. Believe it or not, it is possible for that dream to be realized — in Jesus Christ. Scripture teaches us over and over again that the greatest riches in life are not to be found in the temporal materialism of the world. In Ephesians 3:8 the apostle Paul tells us where real treasure is to be found, a treasure which is well within the grasp of those who have the opportunity to hear the good news of Christ proclaimed, "Unto me . . . was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

There we have it, wealth untold in Jesus Christ. The literal meaning of the word translated "unsearchable" is trackless or untraceable. The same word appears in Romans 11:33 and there is translated "past tracing out" (ASV). The thought is that the riches which are to be had in Christ cannot be searched out by the minds of men alone. These riches transcend mere worldly materialism. They are simply too high and too valuable to be obtained by the feeble efforts of man. The riches of Christ find their source in the goodness of God and are bestowed only in connection with His beloved. This is precisely the meaning of Paul's statement at the beginning of the letter, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." The very fact that these spiritual riches find their source in God means that they are of infinite value. The sum total of the riches which are bestowed in connection with Christ are just too vast to be measured. The worldly fortunes of men like J. Paul Getty, Howard Hughes and others may stagger the imagination, but they are rendered insignificant when compared to the vastness of wealth in Christ.

While it is true that the riches of Christ

are above evaluation, they are not above appreciation. The fable is told of a young prince who sent a present to the beautiful young woman who was soon to be his bride. Included was a note which informed the anxious girl that this was a present of rare value. Hastily opening the box she found nothing but an unattractive egg made of rough looking iron. You can well imagine her disappointment as well as her surprise. Her first impulse was to throw it away, but because it was from her beloved she kept it. As she held the egg in her hand her finger accidentally touched a secret spring. The top of the egg flew open, revealing a smaller egg made of brass. Instantly her curiosity was aroused and another spring revealed another egg, this one made of silver. Yet another and an egg of solid gold. Now content with the beauty and value of her gift, the young woman was touched by the generosity and love of her intended. Yet there was more to be found. One last spring revealed a magnificent cluster of rare and expensive diamonds. The more she sought the more she found, and the more she found, the more she appreciated the affections of the giver. So it is in the experience of the Christian as he continually seeks to know more of the riches of Christ. As we seek out and come to know more of the wealth we possess in Christ by the goodness and generosity of God, the more we appreciate the affections of the giver and the blessings themselves. The discovery of one blessing leads us on to another. Perhaps this is what Jesus had in mind when He promised us an abundant life.

It has been the experience of those in the world that material blessings do not guarantee peace and happiness. A relationship with Jesus Christ promises that which the world would not dare to offer, lasting riches that are infinite in value. Unto us was this grace given, to proclaim to those in the world the unsearchable riches of Christ.



# When My Heart Is Overwhelmed

Tim Gentle, Taylorsville, N.C.

David declared, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Ps. 61:1-2.) No doubt David was feeling the perplexities of life closing in on him much as we do. We do not have the market cornered on distress in the 20th century! The basic troubles of humanity have been the same throughout time. Men are always in search of something to relieve them of the burdens of life. Where can we go when we are overwhelmed? David was inspired to write for us that there is a place we can go, to the "rock that is higher than I."

The New Testament so beautifully describes this rock as Jesus. Paul wrote Corinth, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (1 Cor. 10:1-4.) David further describes this Rock: "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation." (Ps. 89:26.) He tells of refuge which may be found in the rock. "But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge." (Ps. 94:22.)

The Lord wants to be our salvation and refuge from the burdens of life. The old song goes, "... Where could I go but to the Lord." Augustine once said, "I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are very wise and very beautiful; but I never read in either of them, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.'" (Matt. 11:28-30.)

Christ can relieve all of our burdens. The greatest burden that we all bear is the

burden of sin. "When my heart is overwhelmed with sin, lead me to the rock." We are all different in many ways but we all share the need for forgiveness of sin. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) That sin will destroy us! Where do we go? To the Rock, for there is salvation and freedom from the bondage of sin! Are you overwhelmed with sin? Then repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38) and have those sins washed away (Acts 22:16). Learn to hate sin and its tragic results. "Ye that love the Lord hate evil." (Ps. 97:10.)

"When my heart is overwhelmed with temptation, lead me to the rock." If Satan had the audacity to tempt the Lord (Matt. 4), he will surely tempt us to the point we may feel overwhelmed. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. 5:8.) Our hearts may be overwhelmed with the temptation, but there is escape! Paul tells us, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13.) Lead me to the rock, for there is refuge from temptation!

"When my heart is overwhelmed with trouble, lead me to the rock." All of us understand far too well the troubles that life can burden us with. Is there refuge in the rock for my troubles? Does Jesus care about my problems? The apostle Paul writes, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." (1 Pet. 5:7.) When we are distressed we want a friend who understands and can sympathize with us. However, we wonder often, do my friends really care, do they really understand? Never should we need to wonder if the Lord does. The Bible assures us there is refuge for our troubles in the rock! "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble." (Ps. 9:9.) Our world may seem

to be falling apart around us and our troubles are more than we can bear but, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Ps. 46:1-2.) Are you seeking refuge in the rock? How often we feel as though our troubles will overwhelm us! The Psalmist felt this type of pressure when he said, "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. In the multi-

tude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. . . . But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge." (Ps. 94:17-19, 22.)

The storm was raging, the mighty winds were beating the waves upon the rocks of the shore, the lighting crashed, the thunder roared, but nestled in the cleft of the rock with its head tucked beneath its wing, was a little bird, sleeping in peace, oblivious to the terrible storm's fury. That is the kind of peace we can enjoy from all the perils of the soul. "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

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## Central In Spartanburg

The first service of what is now the Central church of Christ in Spartanburg, S.C., was conducted on October 8, 1944, in a rented room by brother Chester A. Hunnicutt; five other members attended. The first meeting house was erected in 1947 on the corner of North Church Street and Cleveland Street, with a seating capacity of one hundred-fifty. As the congregation grew, it eventually became necessary to expand the classroom space into the house behind the building, a house brother Hunnicutt had built and then later sold to the congregation.

In 1971, a four-acre tract of land at the intersection of I-585 and S.C. Highway 9 was purchased. Construction of the present building, with a seating capacity of 460, was begun in May of 1972 and the first service was conducted on the first Sunday in January, 1973. With 10,700 square feet in the building, comprised of the auditorium, 14 classrooms, kitchen, and office space, it appeared that this building would fill the needs for many years to come. But thanks to the grace of God and the hard work of the elders, ministers and many of the members, the classroom space rapidly filled and it was recognized that more classroom space was desperately needed.

In 1980 the church was able to purchase a 10,000 square foot building next door to the church building. The offices were moved to this new facility which also affords room for a library, conference room, large kit-

chen and fellowship room. The present building was renovated to include larger and more adequate classrooms with space also available in the new annex for additional classroom space when the need arises.

The congregation is ably served by James Goodman, L.P. Pitts, Frank Nutt and Roy Tracy as elders; there are also eight deacons: Charles Blackburn, Charles Cope, Raymond Brown, Bob Grizzle, Bob Henderson, Herbert Hughes, Dick Parker, and Jim Trammell. Over the years the congregation has been served by the following ministers: Chester A. Hunnicutt, B.C. Morton, Jr., E. Rogers, Virgil Ritchie (twice), Oscar Cooper, James B. Potts, Jr., C.R. Franks, Jr., Ernest Thigpen, Bob Plunkett (twice) and the present minister, James Meadows. Serving from time to time have been the following associate ministers: J. Terry Wheeler, Peter Cooper, Steve Housley and at present, Jack Rogers.

The membership at Central is 310 and the weekly budget for 1981 is \$2,727.00. The minister, James Meadows, conducts a daily live Bible question and answer radio program which enjoys a wide listening audience; a Sunday program is also conducted. Mission work for the congregation includes financial help to the church in New Ellenton, S.C., and to the church that meets in Mauldin, S.C. Other mission help is also given when the need arises.



# Being A Soul-Winning Congregation

**Jack Cooper, St. George, S.C.**

Bob Danklefsen, a personal evangelism instructor from West Monroe, Louisiana, reported some interesting facts from the Nov.-Dec. 1980 issue of **Church Growth: America**. Most would think that the secret of the rapid spread of Mormonism is their use of many young missionaries everywhere. However, according to the information cited by Danklefsen, their door-to-door work has a conversion rate of only .1% or one for every 1,000 contacts. On the other hand, when Mormons make contacts through personal friendship the conversion rate jumps to 50%. Because of all this, the Mormon Church is changing its missionary strategy. Mormonism is a system of false doctrine, but there is a lesson for Christians who want to see the Lord's church grow. According to this information, the most effective way for God's truth to spread is for the rank-and-file members of Christ's church to lead their friends, neighbors, working companions, relatives, etc., into Bible study and conversion.

Dick Marcear of Amarillo, Texas, in commenting on this same information, noted three lessons for members of the churches of Christ.

1. The members of the church are our best missionaries. You are better than any preacher, elder, etc., in reaching the lost.

2. Bring your friends to church. People change because of people. It's because of your influence that we will be able to find "good soil" that will receive the word with gladness.

3. Start now. People are lost. You are God's lighthouse. Like yeast, begin to influence your world. You are the key to growth.

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Make a friend for Jesus! There is a number of people who will have contact basically with one true Christian, and that Christian is you. If you do nothing to try to bring your friend to Christ, that person will die lost without even an opportunity to hear God's true message. Do you have to do the teaching? Not necessarily, but you will have to provide the Bible study situation for a teacher. You see, the good personal evangelist may not even know your friend. Oh yes, some of your dearest friends will resent your efforts and may become your enemy, but you will also see someone converted who will be grateful to you for all eternity. Will the church in the Carolinas grow? It will if you make a friend for Jesus.

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## Indifference Is The Number One Problem

**John Hudson Tiner,  
House Springs, MO.**

Apathy ranks as the most difficult problem facing the church today. At least that's the opinion expressed by readers polled by **Bible Truth**, a magazine for active Christians edited by John Hudson Tiner. Questions concerning divorce and remarriage are ranked a close second. Other problems include lack of evangelism, liberalism, and lack of leadership.

The readers listed their preference for translations of the Bible. They considered the American Standard Version as the best translation with the New International Version second and King James Translation third.

In the category of best song, "Our God, He Is Alive" received the most votes. "How Great Thou Art" was second and "Victory in Jesus" third.

A copy of the survey with complete results in all categories is available upon request from John Hudson Tiner, P.O. Box 38, House Springs, Missouri 63051.



# The 36th Annual

## April 6, 7

under the

**CENTRAL CHURCH**

**2052 North**

**Spartanburg**

*Theme: "Difficult"*

### Monday, April 6

1:15-1:30 — Introductory Remarks .....	James Meadows
1:30-2:00 — "Methods & Tools" .....	Terry Wheeler
2:00-2:30 — Gen. 6:1-4 .....	Stanley Crews
2:30-2:45 .....	Break — Daily
2:45-3:15 — Matt. 5:33; James 5:12 .....	Jim Gardner
3:15-4:00 — Rom. 2:14, 15 .....	Franklin Camp
4:00-4:15 .....	Break — Daily
4:15-5:00 — Panel Discussion .....	David Pharr, Franklin Camp, James Meadows, Howard Winters — Daily
5:00-7:20 .....	Dinner Break — Daily
7:20-8:00 — Congregational Singing .....	Jack Rogers, Jack Cooper
8:00-8:05 .....	Break — Daily
8:05-8:15 — James 5:8 .....	Brad Dillingham
8:15-9:00 — Rev. 20:1-10 .....	Hudson Nichols

### Tuesday, April 7

9:00-9:30 — Gen. 14:17-24; Heb. 7:1-3 .....	Tom Bolick
9:30-10:00 — Exo. 7:3, 13; 8:15 .....	Raymond Climer
10:00-10:15 .....	Break — Daily
10:15-10:45 — Exo. 21:22-25 .....	Buford Carroll
10:45-11:15 — Deut. 24:1-4 .....	Jerry Hurt
11:15-11:30 .....	Break — Daily
11:30-12:00 — "Clarifying Alleged Discrepancies" .....	James Meadows
12:00-1:30 .....	Noon meal — Daily
1:30-2:00 — Josh. 10:12-14 .....	Frank McElveen
2:00-2:30 — 1 Sam. 16:1-5 .....	Donald Wood
2:45-3:15 — 1 Sam. 28:1-25 .....	Sid Fulford
3:15-4:00 — Rom. 7 .....	Franklin Camp
7:20-8:00 — Congregational Singing .....	Roger Nutt, Terry Wheeler
8:05-8:15 — Ps. 51:5 .....	Kris Bailey
8:15-9:00 — Isa. 7:10-16 .....	David Pharr

All sessions are to be held in the auditorium of the CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Lodging for out-of-town guests will be provided free of charge in homes of members at Central.

# Carolina Lectures

## & 9, 1981

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*cts of the Bible"*

### Wednesday, April 8

9:00-9:30 — Eccle. 3:19-21; 9:4-6 .....	Gilbert Tripp
9:30-10:00 — 1 Cor. 15:29 .....	Dennis Johnson
10:15-10:45 — 1 Cor. 11:20 .....	Johnny Melton
10:45-11:15 — Dan. 7:9-14 .....	Wallace Beasley
11:30-12:00 — Zech. 14:1, 4, 5, 9, 20 .....	C.C. Vaughn
12:00-1:30 .....	Noon meal
1:30-2:00 — John 9:31 .....	James Jones, Jr.
2:00-2:30 — Rom. 8:26, 27 .....	Howard Winters
2:34-3:15 — Rev. 16:12-16 .....	Walter Wagner
3:15-4:00 — Rom. 9, 10, 11 .....	Franklin Camp
7:20-8:00 — Congregational Singing .....	Joe Brenneman, Fred Turner
8:05-8:15 — Matt. 5:17 .....	Jack Rogers
8:15-9:00 — 1 Cor. 11:1-16 .....	Franklin Camp

### Thursday, April 9

9:00-9:30 — Matt. 5:42 .....	Ernest Thigpen
9:30-10:00 — 1 Cor. 12:13 .....	Jerry Senn
10:15-10:45 — James 5:13-15 .....	Darty Crisp
10:45-11:15 — 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:1-4 .....	Floyd Farris
11:30-12:00 — 2 Cor. 6:14-18 .....	Carter Geer
1:30-2:00 — Acts 3:21 .....	Doug Milligan
2:00-2:30 — 1 John 3:8 .....	Ted Rush
2:45-3:15 — Matt. 19:27-28 .....	Gray Flippen
3:15-4:00 — Rom. 9, 10, 11 .....	Franklin Camp
7:20-8:00 — Congregational Singing .....	Wayne Plylar, Davis Senn
8:05-8:15 — 2 Thess. 2:15 .....	Tom Turnbull
8:15-9:00 — 1 Cor. 8; 10:25-33; Rom. 14, 15 .....	David Wheeler

To make your reservations, please call (803) 582-7453 or (803) 582-7524.

We ask that you make reservations no later than April 1.

For those who prefer, the following motels are available near the church building:  
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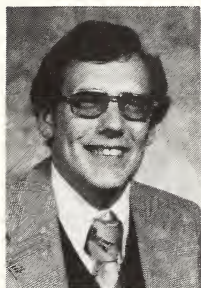
Display space is available on a first-come, first-served basis (final approval to be given by the elders).

# Carolina Pulpit

Edited By

# Johnny Melton

## Biographical Sketch



**Larry Eppley** has been a preacher of the gospel for ten years. He has served the church of Christ in Rockingham, North Carolina, for nearly five years. The oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Eppley of Charlotte, Larry is married to the former Carolyn Pledger of Summer-

ville, GA, and has two children: Richard (age 7) and Jonathan (age 3). Larry is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College ('72) and has

recently served as the guest editor of the **Carolina Christian** (June, 1980).

Larry speaks daily on radio station WKDX, through the one-minute "Just-A-Minute" spots, which are aired three times each day. Also, he has conducted personal development classes for churches in Kentucky, Illinois, and North Carolina. He has recently developed a series of lesson presentations entitled "They Decided to Follow Jesus," in which the changing lives of first-century Christians are analyzed. This special series is being presented to several Carolina churches.

## Sermon

# And When You Pray . . .

## An Expository Lesson From Matthew 6: 5-13

### **Introduction:**

"And when you pray . . ." These words of our Master are in themselves a challenge to every Christian. A casual glance at the accompanying teaching is most revealing. When Jesus used this expression (three times in Matthew's record) he was not suggesting "when you pray" so as to imply "if you should pray." And he may not have even been saying "when you **pray**." Rather from the nature of his teaching, he seems to be saying "when you **pray**." This means that these **Principles for Powerful Prayer** are addressed to that select few who are already willing to make prayer an important part of their lives. Would any professing Christians among us be disqualified by this prerequisite?

### **Transition and Thesis:**

Let's assume, however, that we do want prayer to be an important part of our lives. Let's further suppose that our attitudes are

the same as the twelve disciples who saw Jesus praying, and who asked him, "Lord, **teach** us to pray, just as John also **taught** his disciples." (Luke 11:1.) Will you now join me as we sit at the feet of our Master as he teaches us to pray?

### **Discussion: The Principles of Powerful Prayer**

I. When you pray, do not be a hypocrite (v.5).

A. A human audience is essential to this prayer.

B. A human audience is the object of the prayer.

### **Application:**

To what extent is your prayer a performance?

II. When you pray, seek the secret Father (v.6).

A. Prayer is in itself an expression of one's faith in the Unseen One. (1) Hebrews 11:6:



“ . . . Must believe that He is . . . ” (2) James 4:8: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.” (3) Acts 17:27: “ . . . That they should seek God . . . though he is not far from each one of us.” (4) 2 Corinthians 4:18: “ . . . For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Jesus’ point, sometimes misunderstood, is that one demonstrates his concept of God in the way he approaches prayer.

B. The “secret prayer chamber” suggested by Jesus is more of an attitude than a location. He is more concerned with **why** we pray than **where**.

C. Even congregational prayer must fall under the power of these principles. (1) Congregational prayer is not “public” in the sense of the prayer of hypocrisy which Jesus condemned. (2) Congregational prayer is the united effort of a collection of saints who are lifting their hearts to heaven. (3) Whether two or two hundred, saints can meet privately for prayer, in keeping with this principle.

III. When you pray, forget human superficiality (vv. 7, 8).

A. What the Jews did with their “sidewalk sanctimonies” the Gentiles did with their “vain repetitions.” (1) God wants a heart, not merely a mouth! (See Mark 7:6.) (2) Lengthy rantings do not an acceptable prayer make.

(Luke 18:9-14). Pharisee’s pray four times longer than the publican’s sincere “God be merciful to me a sinner!”

B. We do not pray to inform God of anything. (1) “God knows our needs before we ask.” (v. 8.) (2) Prayer, then, must be an expression of faith and the means of transcending the temporal; the deliberate effort of the human believer to contact the divine Spirit.

IV. When you pray, verbalize acceptable sentiments (vv. 9-13).

A. Verse 9: The transcendent greatness of the heavenly Father.

B. Verse 10: The supreme value of the divine Will.

C. Verse 11: The constant dependence of the human upon the divine.

D. Verse 12: The reality of personal spiritual inadequacy.

E. Verse 13: The ability and right of God to direct our lives.

#### **Conclusion:**

A parting glimpse of the Luke 11 parallel will impress us with the credentials of Jesus, the expert on prayer. “And it came about that while He was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.”

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#### **GLEANINGS OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

## **Forward!**

**Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, N.C.**

“And Jehovah said unto Moses, wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.” (Ex. 14:15.) These words were spoken at a crisis in Israel’s history. For them it was a terrible moment. The Egyptian army was pressing behind them, and they had no means of defense. The sea lay before them, and they had no way to escape. They were already talking about their graves. Moses, too, was at a loss. He was bewildered. He rebuked the people and kept a bold front, but he did not know which way to turn. He believed that they would be delivered, but he did not know how. All that he could do was to remain motionless and give himself to supplication.

While thus situated, the Lord said “**forward!**” It was an inspiring word to Moses, and it may be made so to us today. In the word “forward” we have:

**Progress.** “Go forward.” That is God’s will for man. We can profitably look back on the past only if we seek lessons for the future — lessons that will bring to our hearts greater hope, power, zeal, devotion to God’s word, loftier aspirations, higher aims, and the constant increase of the standard of man’s endeavor. Let’s look at some of the “**Going Forwards**” found in the Bible: (1) **Creation.** God looked upon the face of the earth, formless, void, and dark; but His word was **forward** until it should become the dwelling place of intelligent and happy beings. (2) **Growth.** The mustard

seed was destined to become a great tree, of which the fowls of the air should find shelter. (3) **Going is growing.** That is true, whether an individual Christian or a congregation is considered. (4) **Vision is growing.** Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision the people perish." We need to be daring in our work for the Lord. Ofttimes we put off, we procrastinate, we delay, and nothing gets done. Procrastination is the death of any endeavor. (5) **Going forward is organization.** "Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Cor. 14:40.)

**Direction.** In what direction should progress be made? Toward what are we going forward? (1) **To more knowledge.** The first essential for all other progress is knowledge (Col. 1:9, 10. Phil. 3:7-11). We should make greater efforts to acquire knowledge, especially knowledge of the Bible. Be at home with the characters, places and lessons of the Bible. Having given the Bible the first place, then neglect no other important field of knowledge. (2) **Learn to discriminate between things that differ.** Some are always seeking after the new, while others continue to cling to the old, which may only be ancient error. Seek knowledge and then ask God for wisdom to use it. (3) **Hold firmly to that which you have learned to be true.** (4) **Go forward to a higher life.** What good is the foundation or the root, if we are to have no building or fruit? (5) **To fuller service.** Some seem to think that religion consists of passive emotions rather than active deeds. The Christian life does not consist of dreaming of the future; and neither does Bible study consist only in trying to learn the meaning of some difficult passage couched in figurative language.

**Hindrances.** What are the hindrances to progress? The history of the children of Israel suggests three: (1) **We shall not go forward if we look back.** Continual looking back will cause one to lose sympathy with

the present and lose all hope for the future. We should remember that the past is always distorted and deceptive. (2) **We shall not go forward, if we go around or under.** Doing the same things, but never making progress. Spinning our wheels so to speak. These are not going forward. Do we move forward every day? Do we do something constructive for Christ at every opportunity? Are we constantly doing something to build our character? Do we give of ourselves for others? Do we really try hard at being disciples of Christ? Are we satisfied with ourselves without giving consideration as to whether God is satisfied with us? (3) **We will not likely go forward, if we are filled with fear.** Israel often looked forward, but got no further because of the walled cities and the giants. What was wrong? Was it their faith or lack of it? The Israelites quaked with fear when they saw Goliath. David took one look at him and saw how big he was and knew that he could not miss him with his slingshot. How about us? Are we afraid to take bold moves for Christ for fear we will fail? For fear of what others will think of us? For fear of the work involved? God, in the day of judgment, will not measure us by how many souls we have led to Christ so much as how much effort we have put forward to lead these souls, even though we failed. We will not be saved through our accomplishments, nor lost as the result of our failures. If we have done the best we could, have worked hard to encourage others to come to Christ, have taught them at every opportunity, but they have not responded, we have nothing to fear. Our truehearted, conscientious, and continuous efforts, even though we may not have been able to bring a single soul to Christ, will be the rewarding mark that God will measure us by.

Let us get on with those things that must be done. We delay and matters of great importance just die! Let us have the courage of Moses and the Israelites as they crossed the sea with walls of water high on both sides. Let us have the courage of David when he faced Goliath! If we knew it can and will be done with God's help there is no room for apprehension, fear, or excuse. We need not fear that it will not succeed, or that we cannot do it.

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# Purposes Of Restoration

**John Waddey, Knoxville, Tenn.**

Churches of Christ in America today are heirs of a distinct movement that sprang up on this continent at the turn of the nineteenth century. Noble men and women dedicated their lives to the goal of restoring original Christianity in their day. They sensed the futility of attempting to reform the existing denominations. They concluded that the only practical way to have pure Christianity was to bypass all the existing bodies and begin from "scratch" with the New Testament as their sole guide and blueprint.

## **Reasons and Motives**

No doubt each man who contributed to this movement had many reasons for his efforts. It is also most likely that none of the leaders ever wrote down for posterity all of their motives. Yet we can glean some all-important goals that were shared by the great restoration pioneers. For the sake of our readers who do not yet share our faith, we would hasten to add that the restoration movement of the nineteenth century was not an organized movement with a governing body over it. Not even a single individual can be looked upon as the leader or spokesman. That very first generation saw a number of talented men in widely scattered parts of the land, with distinctly different religious backgrounds, launch their own attempt to recover pure Christianity. This was done without an organized, coordinated effort. It is a fascinating study to trace the growth of this restoration movement and to read of the struggles to arrive at that pure religion of the first century.

1. The restorers wanted to overcome the problem of religious division that plagued the believers in Christ. They felt unity could only be realized in Christ and upon the basis of His New Covenant. All saints should speak the same thing, and be of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10).

2. They wanted to restore the original simplicity and purity of worship of the Lord's church. The centuries had produced numbers of additions and subtractions to

the true worship of God outlined in the New Testament. The Lord's Supper needed to be restored to its proper place as the center of Lord's Day worship. Every saint deserved the privilege to eat the bread and drink the fruit of the vine upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The accumulation of such unscriptural items as incense, candles, holy water, images, crucifixes, and prayer beads needed to be swept away.

3. They sought to discover and proclaim again the gospel plan of salvation first spoken by the Lord and then his holy apostles (Heb. 2:3). Knowing that sinners could not be saved by faith only (James 2:24), or by works done in his own righteousness (Tit. 3:5), they sought and found that way revealed by Christ. The New Testament posited salvation upon faith in Christ, repentance of sin, confession of faith, and immersion in water (Mark 16:16; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38).

4. They desired to restore the local congregation of Christians to its rightful place. Each community of saints should be self-governing under Christ and his inspired word. Christ knew nothing of popes or patriarchs dominating his people. Elders, not preachers, were to rule the congregation (Acts 20:17, 28-31). Associations, conventions, synods, conferences, and councils to govern the churches were all the creations of man and needed to be eliminated.

5. They longed to exalt the Bible to its proper place as the final and complete authority in Christianity. They had seen the damage done by the creeds of the churches. They rejected the traditions of men (Matt. 15:6-9). Their plea was "back to the Bible." It was "to the law and to the testimony" for them (Isa. 8:20). They wanted to find and abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9).

6. They yearned to rid the world of sectarian names in religion and to restore the name of Christ to its honored place. They were not ashamed to be merely "Christians," (1 Pet. 4:16). Since the church was Christ's by right of purchase, why not call it "the church of Christ" even as did Paul? (Rom. 16:16). Of course they objected not




to any other Biblical name for saints or congregations.

7. They felt an obligation to rid Christianity of all those corruptions and errors that had crept in over the centuries, whether in faith or in practice, whether large or small. They were convinced that this could only be accomplished by a rejection of all the denominations of men and a complete return to the divine blueprint laid out in God's word (2 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 8:5b).

That first generation of men succeeded admirably in their efforts. Across the land a mighty wave of God-fearing people joined

hands in the effort. We would not be so bold as to claim that we have perfectly reproduced the total program of Christ today. But I hasten to affirm that those of your neighbors known as the churches of Christ are diligently striving after that goal. Every saint in every generation must in his own life dedicate himself to that noble effort — i.e., to be nothing more or less than the kind of Christian as were Peter, James, John, Paul, and a myriad of others we read of in the New Testament. Will you not join with us in this honorable pursuit?



## *Carolina Church News*

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

#### **NORTH CAROLINA**

**Charlotte.** The Providence Road congregation is offering bonds for sale to finance needed building additions. Hans Faassen, one of their deacons, participated in a mission effort on the island of Jamaica recently.

**High Point.** The "Ladies Day" at Eastchester which was scheduled for April 4 has been postponed until November 7. This was done to avoid a conflict with the "Ladies Day" at Castle Heights in Winston-Salem.

**Fayetteville.** The Cape Fear church reports 18 baptisms in 1980. B.G. Langston has been with the Cape Fear church for nearly 20 years.

#### **N.C. Baptisms**

Archdale, Charlotte, 1; Raleigh, 9; Providence Road, Charlotte, 6; Burlington, 2; Elizabeth City, 1; Linville Forest, Winston-Salem, 1; Helen Street, Fayetteville, 5. Total: 25.

#### **Washington**

**PAUL J. DITORO,** Reporting: The Paul Ditoro family (wife Sandra, son Timothy, daughter Sandy Joyce), moved to Washington on November 7, 1980. The River Road church has 21 members with the Sunday morning attendance running about 30.

There are 20 people actively enrolled in the Bible Correspondence Course, and I have Bible study appointments with two of them. We advertise the Bible Correspondence Course through the newspaper and on the local radio station, WITN. I have two ten-minute radio programs on WITN: one on Sunday morning and another Sunday afternoon. I also plan to write articles for the local newspaper. I am fully supported here by other congregations. My sponsoring congregation is the Cox Boulevard church in Sheffield, Alabama. The Old Charlotte Road church in Pegram, Tennessee, provided funds for the radio and newspaper work. We plan to have two gospel meetings in 1981.

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Allendale.** A note in the Essex Village, Charleston, bulletin indicates that the work in Allendale is progressing. Keith Dixon is the minister. Sid Fulford writes about him: "He seems to be enthusiastic about the work there and believes that in time, much good can be accomplished." Essex Village helps support the work there.

**Charleston.** The church in Essex Village reports 26 baptisms in 1980, compared to 11 in 1979. They also showed an average increase in attendance in all activities.

**West Columbia.** Members will be going to the Kirkland Correctional Institute to conduct services each Sunday.

**Spartanburg.** Central hosted a Christian

Carolina Christian

Education Appreciation Dinner February 27.

**Newberry.** Plans are underway to mail literature to 1,000 homes in the community on a regular basis.

**Rock Hill.** C.W. Bradley will speak in a gospel meeting April 26-May 1 at the Charlotte Avenue church.

**S.C. Baptisms**

Central, Spartanburg, 1; West Columbia, 3; Duncan, 3; Greenwood, 1; Newberry, 2; Shandon, Columbia, 2; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 2; Essex Village, Charleston, 5; Foothills, Clemson, 8; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 3. Total: 30.

**Foothills, Clemson**

**JOHN OWEN,** Reporting: On Sunday, Feb. 8, 1981, we at the Foothills church of Christ enjoyed our most exciting and productive "Bring Your Neighbor Day" in the two-year history of this event. Over 250 people attended the special service and luncheon held at the Clemson House, on the campus of Clemson University. Especially exciting is the fact that approximately 200 of those in attendance were visitors from the community and campus, many of whom were given their first opportunity to see New Testament Christianity. Many opportunities to share the word of God have arisen due to the tremendous effort put forth by the members of the Foothills con-

gregation for this special day. We rejoice to report that, as of February 15, eight people have been baptized into Christ, four of those the week following the "Bring Your Neighbor Day." "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." (Eph. 3:20-21.)

**Florence to Host State Bible Bowl**

The 1981 State Bible Bowl for South Carolina will be held Saturday, March 21, 1981, at the Poyner Community School in Florence, S.C. The questions for the Bible Bowl will come from the books of Hebrews and James. Each congregation should encourage their young people to take part. The purpose of the Bible Bowl is to encourage young people to study the Bible and so this year **ONLY YOUNG PEOPLE** will be allowed on the teams. No adults will be allowed on any of the teams. The Bowl will begin at 1:00 and continue till about 5:00. The Florence congregation will serve supper following the Bible Bowl. Anyone wishing to have a team in the Bowl should contact Bill Young at P.O. Box 956, Florence, S.C. or call 662-1281 or 665-0315.

Poyner Community School is located in Florence at the corner of Palmetto and Dargan Streets.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS, ETC.**

**North Carolina**

Abilene, Statesville, David Pharr .....	March 22-25
Boone, Special Retreat .....	April 3-5
Castle Heights, Winston-Salem, Ladies Day.....	April 4
Broad Street, Statesville, J.M. Powell .....	April 12-16
W. Jefferson, Johnny Melton .....	April 19-24
Cary, Youth Rally.....	April 24-26

**South Carolina**

Greer, Don Smith.....	March 20-22
Florence, Bible Bowl.....	March 21
Northeast, Greenville, Tony Ash.....	March 27-29
Florence, Sid Fulford .....	March 29-April 1
Essex Village, Charleston, VBS Clinic .....	April 4
Central, Spartanburg, Carolina Lectures .....	April 6-9
Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, C.W. Bradley .....	April 26-May 1

## Charleston — Essex Village

A clinic for VBS teachers will be hosted by Essex Village church of Christ on April 4th. The clinic is designed to assist Vacation Bible School teachers to improve their teaching abilities and gain new ideas for learning activities.

Clinic teacher, Dr. Larry Fitzgerald, is Educational Consultant and Executive Editor for Quality Publications, a Texas-based publishing company. Dr. Fitzgerald has a doctorate in Religious Education, with masters in theology, psychology and physics. In addition, Dr. Fitzgerald has a BA in communication with minors in Bible and English.

The VBS Teachers' Clinic will emphasize eight areas: encouragement for teachers; new ideas for the classroom; discipline, activity projects in learning; utilizing assistants; pre and post VBS activities; conserving available teaching time; the best

teaching materials available.

Following are the details of the clinic: Date: April 4th; Times: 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; Location: Essex Village church building. For more information contact: Barry Fike at 556-1792.

## Christian Living Seminar

Striving to achieve the spiritual balance which Christ, in the New Testament, sets before men as the ideal for human living, each year Tennessee Bible College, Cookeville, Tennessee, conducts a seminar (special gospel meeting) on some phase of the Christian life as described in the Bible. The dates for this year's seminar is March 27-29.

The theme this year will be "Your Life Can Be Full of Joy." It is felt that this seminar may dramatically change the lives of those who attend, attentively listen, and prayerfully strive to apply the principles set out and discussed in the various sermons.



# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## On Foreign Soil:

**N.E. Thailand:** Ted Lingren, missionary to Northeast Thailand, reports that during 1980 there were 571 souls baptized into Jesus Christ (well in excess of the goal of 500) and nine new churches started in four provinces. Lingren labors under the oversight of the Wooddale church in Memphis, Tennessee.

**Portugal:** The Sycamore View church of Christ of Memphis, Tennessee, and the Oakcrest church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, recently co-sponsored a mission survey trip to Portugal. Plans are underway to send a mission team that will concentrate its efforts on Lisbon, the Portuguese capital. Lisbon is the only capital city in western Europe where a New Testament church is not presently meeting. At this time there are only three full-time Christian workers located in this European country.

## At Home:

**Knoxville, Tennessee:** The seventh annual lectureship of the East Tennessee

School of Preaching and Missions will be conducted April 15-18. The theme of this year's program is "Continuing in the Doctrine." For more information write or call: East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tennessee 37921, (615) 584-0002 or 584-4657.

**Nashville, Tennessee:** On December 31 of last year the building of the Liliamae church of Christ was broken into and set on fire. The fire burned itself out in the vestibule before doing any significant damage. On January 22, 1981, the building was again broken into and deliberately set on fire, burning to the ground. Everything was lost in the fire. There was no insurance on the building and the burden in replacing the lost items and building a new meeting place is simply too great for the fifty-five members of the Liliamae church to undertake on their own. Contributions to aid the Liliamae church can be sent to W.A. Talley, Jr., Route 6, Box 141, Ashland City, Tennessee 37015.



**FIFTEENTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP**  
**MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING**  
**4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, Tennessee**  
**March 22-26, 1981** (901) 362-5139  
General Theme: *"Current Issues Facing the Church"*

**Sunday, March 22, 1981**

6:00 — J.F. Camp: "Israel Today: Fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy."

**Monday, March 23, 1981**

8:30 — Donald W. Treadway: "Evils of Abortion."

9:30 — Mrs. Irene Taylor: "Great Bible Women." (For the ladies)

9:30 — R.R. Taylor: "The Divided Assembly."

10:30 — J.F. Camp: "Israel Today: Fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy."

11:20-1:10 — INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH — DAILY

1:10 — Charles B. Myers: "Elder-Preacher Relationship."

2:10 — Glann M. Lee: "What Manner of Persons Ought Ye to Be."

3:10 — OPEN FORUM, PANEL: DAILY

4:00-7:10 — INTERMISSION, DAILY

7:10 — CONGREGATIONAL SINGING, DAILY

7:30 — W.E. Wardlaw: "Total Commitment."

**Tuesday, March 24, 1981**

8:30 — Leon Stancliff: "The Sword of the Lord Has Two Edges."

9:30 — Mrs. Irene Taylor: "Great Bible Women." (For the ladies)

9:30 — Glenn B. Ramsey: "Establishing Biblical Authority."

10:30 — Glann M. Lee: "The Glorious Church."

1:10 — Charles B. Myers: "Elder-Preacher Relationship."

2:10 — W.E. Wardlaw: "Total Commitment."

7:30 — Leon Stancliff: "The Danger of Losing Our Children While Trying to Educate Them."

**Wednesday, March 25, 1981**

8:30 — J. Noel Merideth: "The Divorce Dilemma."

9:30 — Mrs. Irene Taylor: "Great Bible Women." (For the ladies)

9:30 — F.D. Young: "The A.D. 70 Theories."

10:30 — J. Noel Merideth: "The Divorce Dilemma."

1:10 — David Meek: "Contending for the Faith."

2:10 — W.E. Wardlaw: "Total Commitment."

7:30 — Winfred Clark: "The Saint in James."

**Thursday, March 26, 1981**

8:30 — Leroy Medlock: "Scope of Evangelistic Authority."

9:30 — Mrs. Irene Taylor: "Great Bible Women." (For the ladies)

9:30 — J.A. Thornton: "The Problem of Mixed Marriages."

10:30 — Winfred Clark: "Exhortation From Hebrews."

1:10 — W.N. Jackson: "Materials and Methods Useful in Meeting Error."

2:10 — F.D. Young: "Problem of Premillennialism."

7:30 — Robert R. Taylor: "Problems Faced in the Eldership."

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 4, APRIL 1981



C289.21  
C292

THE BODY OF CHRIST . . .

(Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18, 24.)

THE HOUSE OF GOD . . .

(1 Tim. 3:15.)

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD . . .

(Eph. 2:19.)

HOUSEHOLD OF THE FAITH . . .

(Gal. 6:10.)

KINGDOM OF GOD . . .

(John 3:5; Acts 8:12.)

THE SAVED . . .

(Acts 2:41, 47.)

THE SANCTIFIED . . .

(1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Thess. 2:73.)

**THE  
CHURCH  
OF  
CHRIST**



# EDITORIAL

## DIVINE AUTHORITY

From all appearance our world has gone mad, especially relating to moral issues and human value. Because of the materialistic outlook that has saturated man's thinking, resulting from the ungodly and unholy theory of evolution, he thinks and talks and acts as if he has no soul — that man is nothing more than an accidental arrangement of atoms. The spiritual part of man is thus starved and he has become hardened and selfish, caring nothing for the welfare of none but himself. Every man does what is right in his own eyes, and because his eyes are closed to all wrong everything is considered right. Consequently, what used to be wrong is now acceptable practice . . . and there is no wrong at all except as each defines wrong not for himself but for his fellowman. David H.C. Read puts his finger on our plight when he says, "We are watching the complete breakdown of the cluster of values — our inheritance from Judaism, Christianity and Hellenism — that sustained what we call the civilization of the West. The moral and spiritual axioms on which our fathers depended, whether or not they obeyed them, are vanishing. Everything is questioned; everything is in flux. There is not a single assumption of the past that is now sheltered from the winds of change. There is no accepted authority, no unspoken consensus about right and wrong. The established generation is unsure of itself, fumbling and guilt-ridden. The revolutionary generation knows what it wants to overthrow but not what it wants to construct." (**Religion Without Wrappings**, p. 153.)

That pretty well describes our plight and the reason for it is the fact that there "is no accepted authority." As Brother Hardeman used to say, "That's not nearly it; that's it." But in discovering the cause of the problem we have also uncovered the solution to it — an acceptance of authority. But what authority offers the solution? It is not that of creeds, men, subjective opinions, scholarly conclusions, human reason, situa-

tion ethics, etc., but the eternal inspired word of God. When we all return to the Bible and its divine standard of authority we can determine again what is right and what is wrong and in so doing we can do the right and shun the wrong. Divine authority (revealed to us in the inspired Scriptures) is the only solution to the ills of this world. Let us, therefore, one and all, return to the Bible for everything pertaining to faith and practice. Restore divine authority to the earth. And when we do we will find the mess we have gotten ourselves into will be cleared up.

## WHO WILL SHOW US ANY GOOD?

"There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." (Ps. 4:6.)

David here depicts two classes of people: First, the pessimist, the cynical, the infidel, the unbeliever who sees nothing in the world but evil. He asks, "Who will show us any good?" Second, David himself illustrates those who see God's hand in the outworkings of both nature and man. While many see no good anywhere or in anything, he says, "Lift thou up the light of

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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thy countenance upon us.” He knows that God can show him good in all things, even in the things that may seem evil to the unbeliever.

These two philosophies illustrate the lives of men: the former lives in a world of fear and chance and sees it controlled only by fate — a fate over which he has no control and to which he cannot appeal for mercy or change; the latter trusts God and believes that He has a purpose in everything. “Good” and “bad” are not determined by the standards of men or how men may feel about them, but by whether they are serving or defeating the purposes of God. Good is that which is right; evil is that which is contrary to right. And right is the will of God. The difference in the two philosophies is the difference in believing in blind fate (a materialistic outlook on life which results in hopelessness) and in trusting divine providence (seeing God as the Ruler, Director, and Controller of His world) — seeing the hand of God at work, and knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right (cf. Gen. 18:25).

The lesson: trust God and He will show you good.

## **WRONG WAY**

In recent years we have observed signs posted on one-way streets or exits off major highways which simply say, “Wrong Way.” This is a warning. To go the wrong way will cause you to do the wrong thing or go to the wrong place. We read somewhere that in 1933 a pilot named Douglas Carrington got his directions mixed up. He took off from Brooklyn, New York, on a flight to Los Angeles, California, but he ended up instead in Dublin, Ireland. He lamely excused himself by saying that he intended to fly west but had headed east instead. This earned for him the name of “Wrong Way, Carrington,” and gave to us a delightful new expression in our language.

When we were growing up in the poverty-stricken mountains of upper east Tennessee, Mother always made our shirts . . . and that by the same pattern! They were the type which had only two buttons at the top and one had to get into them by sliding them over his head. We always disliked

them with a passion; we wanted a shirt which buttoned all the way down the front. We would sit wide-eyed each time Mother would make a new one, hoping against hope that this one would turn out with buttons from top to bottom. But they never did! For this reason we grew up with very little experience in buttoning shirts. When we finally got one that buttoned all the way down, we had a problem: we would invariably start with the wrong hole and wind up having to do it all over again. But we learned one thing from a shirt that buttoned all the way down: unless you start right you always come out wrong.

And so it is in life and in religion. We must start right and keep on going the right way in order to end up at the right place . . . heaven! To go the wrong way will take us to the wrong place.

## **DO YOUR OWN THING, IF . . .**

Out of the hippy culture came the expression, “Do your own thing.” We suspect that it was born out of a rebellious spirit — rebellious against everything that smacked of authority, including God and the Bible. And most who used it usually meant to act as you please or act in total disregard to the restraining voice of authority, whether it be parents, law, or God. But the expression caught on and has now become a part of nearly everyone’s vocabulary. Most of the rebellious attitude has been dropped from it and in some cases it is used to mean no more than to do what you can do — do what God made you to do. When this is the case it is simple, concise, and clear and therefore not a bad expression. It is, in this case, possible for one to do his own thing and still be pleasing to the Lord. Thus we can truthfully say, “Do your own thing,” if . . .”

— If your thing is belief in God and His creative power.

— If your thing is belief in the Bible as the only authoritative rule of faith and practice.

— If your thing is belief in Christ as God’s Son, belief in His Lordship, belief in His vicarious death as the only means of human redemption.

— If your thing is complete submission to the will of God in all things.

— If your thing is to love the church, God's people, the lost, etc.

— If your thing is to carry out the Great Commission — to preach the glorious gospel of Christ to every creature on earth.

— If your thing is to live the Christian life in all purity and sincerity.

If one loves God, His Word, His Son, and His cause first and foremost, if he puts the kingdom first in his life and action, his thing will be to please God in every act. Or as Paul put it, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31.)

## DISTRUST, HATE, AND PREJUDICE

Hate and prejudiceness are not new things (the editorial page of **Carolina Christian** has often spoken out against them, especially as they relate to race relations), but a new and terrifying dimension is shaping up around them now in America, namely distrust. This has already grown to the extent that groups are arming themselves for protection against other groups, and each has declared its intentions to use the arms, either aggressively or in self-defense. This is creating a tense atmosphere, the kind that may well explode into bloodshed at the least provocation. Group is arming itself against group and this is creating an incredible amount of distrust. Tension and distrust are fueling the fires. And all this spells trouble ahead unless we learn to live together in love, trust, and respect. Otherwise distrust, hate, and prejudice may destroy us.

Knowing how we feel about such mat-

ters, our good friend and brother, Ken Willis of Pinellas Park, Florida, sent us the following poem by James Patrick Kinney, which we now share with you:

### The Cold Within

*Six humans trapped by happenstance  
In bleak and bitter cold.*

*Each one possessed a stick of wood  
Or so the story's told.*

*Their dying fire in need of logs,  
The first man held his back;  
For of the faces around the fire  
He noticed one was black.*

*The next man looking cross the way  
Saw not one of his church;  
And could not bring himself to give  
The fire his stick of birch.*

*The third one sat in tattered clothes,  
He gave his coat a hitch.  
Why should his log be put to use  
To warm the idle rich?*

*The rich man just sat back and thought  
Of the wealth he had in store  
And how to keep what he had earned  
From the lazy, shiftless poor.*

*The black man's face bespoke revenge  
As the fire passed from his sight.  
For all he saw in his stick of wood  
Was a chance to spite the white.*

*The last man of this forlorn group  
Did nought except for gain;  
Giving only to those who gave  
Was how he played the game.*

*Their logs held tight in death's still hand  
Was proof of human sin.  
They didn't die from the cold without  
They died from the cold within.*

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# Why Don't Preachers Study More?

Larry Eppley, Rockingham, NC

It's ten o'clock a.m. and the preacher's workday is well underway. However, at this moment our salaried servant is not to be seen at the local hospital. Nor is he calling on the church's shut-ins. Neither is he conducting a Bible study. In fact, the only indication of his continued earthly existence is an empty car in the church parking lot. As we approach the office we note that no counselling session is in progress. We hear no mimeograph machine turning out the weekly bulletin. Whatever could our minister be doing?

He has applied himself to an ancient and somewhat rare art. He has forgotten for the moment all of the other places where he could be. He has even overcome the natural inclination to feel guilty at such a time as this. He is totally absorbed and mentally alert. The preacher is studying.

Occasionally when a sermon has gone stale or come up empty, someone will remark, "I wonder why he doesn't study more." The statement is valid. Why do preachers not study more?

## Not the Number One Priority

With many preachers, preaching (and therefore adequate preparation time) is not their most important task. Now before we become too critical, perhaps we should reflect upon a general attitude in our brotherhood today. What preacher has not experienced that gut-rending feeling that occurs when several of the members (for reasons acceptable or unacceptable, let God be the judge) find it necessary to leave before the sermon begins. What preacher has not suffered put-downs such as "We're not hiring you just to preach. We want a personal worker, a youth worker, a hospital minister, a hired 'meeter-and-greeter,' a church secretary, etc.?" And what of the audience which is more impressed with a power presentation of anything than a pertinent proclamation of divine truth? Obviously a located preacher will accomplish more than present two sermons weekly (he

committed himself to Christ before he decided to preach). But really, shouldn't preparation for his public presentations be a top priority item? Let's suppose that the preacher also teaches two Bible classes each week. Now figure the necessary preparation time and add to that the works and programs which he willingly involves himself in, and you have a very full week.

## Bible Study Not Understood

I've often been amused at the member who steps into the minister's study. "What do you need all these books for?" or, "I need to borrow a couple of commentaries — you don't need them, do you?" Or perhaps the person just looks, is overwhelmed, and quietly walks out.

The average member does not understand what Bible study is. Nor does he or she realize why a Bible, a sermon-outline book and a Bible class quarterly are not sufficient. Take the average church office-minister's study. More times than not, it is a left-over room with some shelves, an old desk, inadequate lighting and an "office" sign on the door. Now just what are the designers (I use the word loosely) telling us about their understanding of the preacher's study-life? Basically that they have very little! And that they don't really expect this room to be used. After all, how much time can it take to prepare two sermons, two classes, a radio talk or newspaper column, a challenging and informative bulletin article, and then to pursue other Bible-related matters of personal interest? In fact many members, if they thought that their minister was spending four or so hours a day in personal study, would think he was loafing.

## The Word of God and Prayer

The twelve apostles said it, back in the early days of the Jerusalem church. "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. . . . But select seven men . . . whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

(Acts 6:2-4, NASB.)

It is true of course that the Holy Spirit revealed the word of God directly to the apostles, and that "the ministry of the word" involved preaching and teaching, publicly and privately. But we must also note that these men were determined above all else to devote themselves to prayer **and** to the word. These men were not robots, coldly programmed with a canned message. They were active participants in the process of spiritual growth. They received the word, but they had to make the application to themselves, and then to others. This they did carefully, painstakingly, and prayerfully. "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching"; wrote Paul to Timothy, "persevere in these things; for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you." (1 Tim. 4:16, NASB.) The word of God and prayer! This implies preparation, meditation, and a great sense of personal responsibility.

Just what were the twelve apostles? Eyewitness of the Resurrection to be sure. And more. They were not the directors of the massive church relief program. Nor were they the elders of the Jerusalem church. They were the church's first located evangelists. They were **preachers extraordinaire**. And because they were preachers, they refused to neglect the word of God. For the 20th-century proclaimer, that requires hours of preparation, even in addition to whatever formal training one may have received. (A college diploma does not negate the need for consistent meditation.) When the preacher neglects the word and prayer, the local church at best becomes a secular club of humanitarians, but it cannot be a colony of heaven on earth.

### When the Bible Comes Alive!

Through prayer and meditation of God's revealed word, the Bible comes alive within the heart of the preacher. He is humbled, encouraged, and activated. The gospel, God's salvation dynamite, is exploding within. When this preacher steps into his pulpit, he truly has a message to share, and good news to proclaim.

Why is this so? Take Peter as an example. When "asked" by the local authorities

to remove the crucifixion and resurrection narrative from his sermon repertoire, Peter was persistent. Had Peter's message been only a series of lifeless declarations to which he felt compelled to give lip service, he would not have replied, "We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20.)

There is a sense in which this same principle must apply to the contemporary preacher, if the Bible is to come alive in his preaching. Suppose the subject is Moses. The preacher can matter-of-factly preach about Moses, moralize a bit and then leave him behind, a lifeless form who served only to suggest a few favorite New Testament Scriptures which the preacher wanted to quote. Or the preacher and his audience can "see and hear" Moses — the indifferent and unbelieving shepherd who struggled with his own inadequacies, but who through the power of God became the prophet of prophets and leader of leaders, "whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deut. 34:10).

One can quote the words of the apostles as if the New Testament is merely a container from which statements are drawn at random, or one can share with his audience Peter, and how he became more like Jesus as he applied the truths of 2 Peter 1 to his life. Or Paul and what it had cost him to be able to utter the sublime sentiment of Galatians 2:20. Or the message from the disciple of love who was "anything but" when Jesus called him (1 John). Likewise, Jesus must not be paraded before the preacher's audience as the God-person who tried to fake humanity. Rather, let him be presented as the Eternal Word who dared become human, accepting the physical limitations thereby imposed, and who was willing to face temptation through his flesh, that he might overcome it, and that we might behold God.

Such a message is far more than a condemnation of society's many evils. It also includes a faith-building, hope-instilling, and love-producing message which is presented through the lives of God's servants throughout all human history — who can be "seen and heard" today. What an exciting event indeed, when the Bible comes

alive within preacher and pulpit. What an incentive for a thorough and prayerful study of God's word.

### On Holy Ground

Why do preachers not study more? The pressures of secondary matters. The neglect of the word and prayer. Failure to let the

Bible come alive. And no doubt many other reasons. Whatever the cause, such an inadequacy is dispelled when pulpit and pew apply to their Bible study the principle declared by God through the burning bush, as Moses drew near to receive a divine message: "The place whereon you stand is holy ground!"

# The Amazing Grace Of God

**Clayton Winters, Erwin, Tenn.**

The Scriptures ascribe our salvation to the grace of God: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9.)

We normally define grace as being the unmerited favor of God. But what we really need is a definition which illustrates grace — a handle we can latch on to. Perhaps this will help. A preacher presented a lesson on God's grace as being that which we need rather than what we deserve. The same week a young boy aimed a snowball at the preacher's top hat, but hit him squarely in the face instead. The preacher's first impulse was to tell the boy's parents, but rather decided to give the boy an object lesson on the meaning of grace. Knowing the boy had broken his fishing pole a few weeks before, he bought an outfit and presented it to him with a reminder of the snowball incident. He had judged the boy to deserve a sound thrashing, but gave him instead what he needed — a fishing pole. "Now, my boy," asked the preacher kindly, "in the light of my lesson last Sunday, do you understand what grace is?" Hesitatingly, the boy replied, "It must be a fishing pole, sir!"

Well, perhaps near the truth! He deserved a thrashing; he got what he needed. And this does clearly illustrate God's grace. The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-24) had demanded his portion of his father's substance, which he promptly wasted in riotous living. When he ended up with nothing but

husks to fill his belly, he decided to return to his father. Because of his pompous disrespect for his father, he already had what he deserved — the hogpen. But his kind and loving father saw his need, "... and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." He then supplied a robe for his body, a ring for his hand, shoes for his feet, and food — real food — for his stomach. He got what he needed, not what he deserved.

The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (John 4:9). In contempt the Jew would spit in the track of the Samaritan. Treated in such a despicable way, the Samaritan owed the Jew nothing; the Jew deserved nothing from him but contempt. But as a Samaritan passed by a Jew who had been beaten and robbed (Luke 10:25-37), grace responded to need: "... And when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." What the Jews deserved from the Samaritan was one thing; what he got was something else.


Jesus said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12.) This in essence demands that we extend grace to others — give to them what they need, not what their action may merit. They may deserve an eye for an eye, but they need grace extended in the form of the other cheek (Matt. 5:39). I am told that T.B. Larimore, a small man, was physically attacked by a much larger fellow who dis-



agreed with him about God's plan of salvation. Larimore turned the other cheek. The man was later baptized: he got what he needed, not what he deserved.

But the greatest manifestation of grace in all the world is God's sending His Son to die for my sins (John 3:16). I have sinned against God (Rom. 3:23); I deserve death and hell

(Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:46). But the amazing grace of God has responded with life: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10.) "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound . . ."



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#### GLEANINGS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

## Salt And Light

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, N.C.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." (Matt. 5:13-16.) Jesus here describes the influence which He expects His disciples to have upon the world. He expects them to endeavor to cultivate in others the same traits of character which they possess.

There is a profound lesson taught by the emblems mentioned by Jesus, "salt and light." They both emphasize the Christian's distinctive character, his spiritual separation from the world. That they not participate in the ways of the world and that they not cherish in their hearts and minds the evil practices of the world. They must not set their hearts upon the things which belong only to this life, although legitimate and in and of themselves (1 Cor. 7:31).

Only when salt retains its savor does it serve as a preserving and seasoning power; and only when light remains light will it shine. In like manner, only when Christians maintain their distinctiveness will they be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Salt has especially a negative function — namely, to preserve from decay. It, therefore, pictures the citizens of the king-

dom in their struggle against deterioration. Light has a positive function — namely to illuminate. It, therefore, represents Christians in their zeal in their spreading of the gospel throughout the world. Salt acts secretly. One knows that it prevents decay and seasons food, but he cannot see it perform its work. In a similar manner, Christians influence the world by means of their inner life, prayer, love, etc. Light shines openly, publicly; and it is the way that citizens of the kingdom affect the world.

The influence of faithful followers of Christ is far-reaching in its effect upon the world. When Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," he was stating a solemn fact; and in doing so he gave to his disciples one of the highest compliments possible. It was true then and it is true now. When people want to describe the best people in a community they usually say, "They are the salt of the earth!" Salt is one of the most useful gifts of the world, and by means of this example of Christians being the salt of the earth stated by Jesus, He gave them a clear and powerful call to duty. He wanted them to realize that they had within themselves the purpose and the power to make other men better. These are days in which it appears fashionable to criticize the church. The church, of course, is not perfect, but it is doing more than the vast majority of institutions to preserve the earth from decay. What would be the condition of the world without the influence of the church? Many of the very people who criticize the church have their lives and property, and that of their loved ones, safeguarded by the in-

fluence of the institution of which they speak so disparagingly. The salt that Jesus had in mind was a mixed substance; and it was said to have lost its savor when the sodium had been washed out of the earthly residue. A saltless Christian, then, is one who has gone back to the earthly, the worldly, and the carnal. The heavenly element is no longer in him.

"Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:14-16.) These words were not spoken to statesmen, scholars, and the socially powerful, but to men and women who did not have brilliance, so far as the world counts brilliance. They were plain, provincial people, and yet Jesus told them that they were the light of the world. Jesus did not mean that they would equal the great thinkers intellectually. But, He did mean that they would have an experience, an inner secret that would be of far greater consequence (John 1:9). The light which Christians have is indispensable to the solution of the problems of mankind. There is a natural tendency in human nature to seek satisfaction in material things. This attitude however, does not really satisfy. The result is that people ask more from society than they are willing to contribute. The world's idea of success is to get something whether it be money, power, or prestige. However, the real things of life are not possessions of a material nature, but affections, attitudes, and fellowship. No man can live with and for Jesus and not let his light shine. Light is the only force that overcomes darkness. Without light the problems of life cannot be solved. Light has a God-magnifying power. It is preposterous to think that any one can please God and not seek to glorify Him among men. Christians should let their light shine brightly. They should let it shine conspicuously. They should let it shine individually. They should let it shine continuously.

A story is told of a storm which occurred one night, during which an ocean liner was in danger of being lost. The entire crew was individually at work. One of the sailors fell and injured himself with the result that no further service was possible on his part and he had to return to his room. When he got there he was depressed because he had done

so little toward salvation of the ship. While meditating about his plight he heard a cry, "man overboard." He instantly aroused himself and, lighting his little lamp, he held it at the porthole. The feeble rays of light fell on the water. The other sailors could then see the drowning man, with the result that he was saved. This is what Jesus wants every one of us to do. While our individual efforts may not seem to count for much, they may, nevertheless, bring great results when faithfully exercised.

*Let the lower lights be burning!*

*Send a gleam across the wave!*

*Some poor fainting, struggling seaman,*

*You may rescue, you may save.*

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# Editorial Glimmerings

Vada Woodie of West Jefferson, N.C., asked, "What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?" There are two aspects (or views) to this question. If it means, "What happened when one was baptized in the Holy Spirit or how precisely was it accomplished?" perhaps we can never know. The Bible does not explain it. It simply states the fact and leaves it there. And that is where we choose to leave it. But on the other hand if by the question is meant "What were the results of this baptism and upon whom was it performed?" the answer for the most part is fairly clear. We assume that the latter aspect is meant and therefore proceed to offer some observations that may serve to throw some Scriptural light on the matter.

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise to be received and not a command to be obeyed — a promise to be received by specific ones in the beginning of the church. John the Baptist first introduced the subject by saying, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." (Matt. 3:11.) While it is not specified by name, Jesus told His apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). The power they were to receive, when viewed in the total context of the New Testament, was the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the power that guided them in the revelation of all truth (John 16:13). Just before His ascension back to heaven, Jesus renewed the promise: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:5.) It should be noted in particular that in every instance the baptism in the Spirit is a promise to be received and never a command to be obeyed. The apostles were to wait in Jerusalem until they received it; not wait until they could either perform it or obey it. This is a vital aspect of the subject, and once it is grasped one will have no difficulty in distinguishing be-

tween Holy Spirit baptism and the baptism of the Great Commission.

On the day of Pentecost the apostles received the promise (Acts 2:1-4). Later, Cornelius and his household received the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 10:44-46; 11:15, 16) and were then commanded to be baptized in water — the former being something they received and the latter something they obeyed; the former a promise, the latter a command.

2. The baptism of the Spirit was administered only by Christ. John had said, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 3:11.) Men were commanded to baptize in water and be baptized in water but no one was ever commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This was an action performed by Christ and Christ alone, as far as the New Testament is concerned. This is seen by the fact that Jesus instructed the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power from on high (Luke 24:49) — that is, wait until the baptism of the Holy Spirit was given them from heaven. The apostles could neither baptize themselves nor others in the Spirit (cf. Acts 10:44-48). It was a gift from on high. It is therefore an action of deity, not an action of men — something given by Christ Himself and not something done by man.

3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit obviously bestowed miraculous power upon those who received it. While it is true that Jesus had given the apostles power to work miracles (probably on a limited basis) before they were baptized in the Spirit (Matt. 10:8), it is absolutely certain that additional powers were given to them when the Holy Spirit came upon them in the baptismal measure. Jesus had told them, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1.) The power was to come with the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49). The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost. Thus the power came with the Holy



Spirit on Pentecost — came with miraculous power. This is why it can be said, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4.) The Spirit thus gave them miraculous power to speak with new tongues (languages) which they had never studied. All this means that miraculous power was bestowed along with the baptism of the Spirit or else it resulted from it. This was not dynamic personal power, as so many believe, but miraculous power, power to speak in new tongues (that is, languages never studied), to heal the sick, to cast out devils, to drink deadly poison without harm, to raise the dead, to reveal and record by inspiration the will of God. It was not personal charisma; it was the power of God working through them.

4. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was limited to the apostles of Christ and to the household of Cornelius. The apostles and the apostles only received it on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4). This was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21) and the promise made to them by the Lord while He was with them in the flesh (John 16:7-14). The apostles were chosen and commissioned by Christ to do a special work — the work of revealing and confirming (by the power of the Holy Spirit) the word of God. The baptism of the Spirit enabled them to carry out this work, to guarantee that the will of God would be delivered to the world free from all human error. Their commission was given before the Spirit came, but they were to wait for Him before they started the proclamation of the gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:49). Thus the baptism of the Holy Spirit was given to the apostles to enable them to do the special work Christ had chosen them to do. Since no one else was to do the work of an apostle, no one else (except the house of Cornelius, and that is a special case) was promised the baptism of the Spirit.

5. The household of Cornelius did receive the baptism of the Spirit, but it was for a special purpose, namely, to convince the apostles that the Gentiles were acceptable gospel subjects. While there are some good

men who deny that Cornelius was so baptized, the denial must be made by engaging in some exegetical acrobatics. Peter said: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:15-17.) When Peter saw what happened to Cornelius and his household his mind went back to Pentecost, to "the beginning," not to other cases where the Holy Spirit had been given by the laying on of apostolic hands. What happened on Pentecost and what happened at the household of Cornelius was peculiar to these two occasions. Otherwise why did what happened to Cornelius remind Peter of the Lord's promise to baptize them with the Holy Spirit?

Those who try to make a distinction in the two occurrences say that Cornelius could not have been baptized with the Spirit because he did not become (or do the work of) an apostle. This however overlooks a simple fact: the apostolic commission and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are two distinct things. While the household of Cornelius was baptized in the Spirit, it was never given apostolic authority (the baptism of the Spirit *per se* did not make apostles). Thus the appointment to the apostleship and the commission given to them is one thing and the baptism of the Holy Spirit is another. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was given to aid the apostles in carrying out their commission. Cornelius received the baptism but not the commission.

To show this beyond a conceivable doubt, the Greek text says that what happened on both occasions was equal or the same. The word translated "like" in Acts 11:17 is the Greek *isos*, which, according to Young, means equal. Thayer says, "Equal, in quality or quantity . . . the same gift." And he gives Acts 11:17 as the source of this definition. The word *isos* is translated equal elsewhere (e.g., Matt. 20:12; Phil. 2:6; Rev. 21:16). The word *homoios* is the Greek word for like in the sense of resem-

bling, while isos is like in the sense of quality. Thus Peter did not say that they had received a similar (*homoios*) gift, but the same (*isos*) gift. But this by no stretch of the imagination means that they received apostolic power or authority. Their gift was the same in measure (the baptismal measure) but was obviously for a different purpose.

What then was the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit? To the apostles it was to reveal the will of God and aid them (miraculously) in carrying out their apostolic commission of delivering and confirming the word of God. On the household of Cornelius it was to convince the apostles that the Gentiles had become gospel subjects. As far as can be determined from the Scriptures, it served no other purpose . . . nor was it intended to serve any other purpose. It is therefore reasonable to assume that, while they received the baptismal measure of the Spirit along with the apostles, they did not receive apostolic power or authority, and the reception of the baptismal measure was for the benefit of the apostles, not for their own benefit. For all practical purposes, therefore, in the reception, deliverance, and confirmation of the revelation of God's will, only the apostles received the baptismal measure of the Spirit

— Cornelius and his household received the same measure but not to aid them in carrying out an apostolic mission.

So then the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that miraculous endowment given by Christ to His apostles to enable them to receive, proclaim, and deliver the truth (ultimately in written form) to the world — to reveal to lost man the saving truth of the gospel. It was not given for their own personal benefit (except as that was involved in the revelation of truth) or to dynamically empower them (to enlarge on or improve their personalities) or to aid them in believing or obeying the truth (to make it easier for them to follow Christ). Its purpose was to make known through them the will of God. Once the Holy Spirit had revealed the will of God through the apostles (and the ones chosen by them and upon whom they imparted spiritual gifts by the laying on of their hands), and that will had been inerrantly recorded for all to read and understand (in the New Testament Scriptures), its purpose had been served. No one else had been promised it and consequently no one else received it. In fact, no one else, either then or now, needed it. The truth has been revealed. Thus there would be no purpose for the baptism of the Spirit now.

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# Was Jesus Narrowminded?

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

So much emphasis is given in our times to "broadmindedness" in religion that few seem to realize that by modern standards Jesus Christ was a very "narrowminded" person. Of course it matters not that people would think He was narrow. He was (and is) right!

Because there are so many differing views, it is commonly insisted that any position is all right so long as one is sincere. If we insist that the only right way is the Bible way, many will say we are too narrow. But is it wrong to be as "narrow" as Jesus?

**Consider How "Narrow" Jesus Is:**

**About Belief.**

*If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*

This means people who hold to other religions (Jewish, Hindu, etc.) are not saved.

**About Obedience.**

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

What does this say about the idea that maybe some people will be saved even though they refuse to obey the Lord's requirements?

**About Morality.**

*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

**About Divorce.**

*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

**About False Teachers.**

*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

*Ye shall know them by their fruits.*

*Let them alone: they be blind leaders of*

*the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*

One can hardly read the statements Jesus made regarding many of the religious leaders of His day without realizing that He had no sympathy for those who taught false doctrine.

**About Refusing to Accept His Teaching.**

*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*

**About Worship.**

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

He says some worship is **vain**. Why? Because of the doctrines of men. Acceptable worship is "**in truth**." Worship which is not authorized by the Bible is vain. The "narrow" position Jesus holds is that there is only one right way to worship.

**About Baptism.**

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

The position that baptism is essential for salvation is frequently ridiculed as narrow. But Jesus said, "Except . . ." If one can enter the kingdom without the birth of water and Spirit, Jesus did not know it.

**About the Necessity of Commitment.**

*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

**About How Many Will Be Saved.**

*Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

**About Who to Love Most.**

*Think not that I am come to send peace*



*on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

*For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*

*And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

*He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

These are only a few examples of how "narrowminded" Jesus is. Worldly hearts would prefer religion which is not so exacting, which embraces more and refuses little. Ultimately we must decide whether to accept the absolute authority of the word of God or to accept a "broad" view. The broad view will be less criticized. It will be easier to follow. The world will put less pressure on such a religion. But can it be called "Christian" when it refuses the "narrowness" of Christ?



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

### On Foreign Soil:

**Sri Lanka:** In December, 1980, 250 to 300 Christians came together at each service of a gospel meeting. This was the largest group of Christians to come together in one place in Sri Lanka in hundreds of years, possibly the largest since the beginning of Christianity. Forty people were converted during the meeting in which Perry Cotham of Grand Prairie, Texas, did the preaching. The work in Sri Lanka is beginning to gain great momentum and the Christians there believe that even greater things lie ahead.

**Zimbabwe:** Civil war in Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) has finally halted. In the course of the fighting there were Christians killed and other believers were placed in prison and tortured. Many congregations had stopped meeting because of fear, but now gospel preaching is once again going on in the villages. One of the native preachers there, brother Mhlanga, reports that in November of 1980 there were eight baptisms and 26 restorations.

**Poland:** Bolek Davidow is a Polish Christian who wants to tell others of Jesus Christ and New Testament Christianity. Recently he was arrested and spent 40 days in jail for the alleged crime of having too many Bibles in his home. However, at his hearing he was found "Not Guilty" and it was the court's judgment that "distributing the word of God does not present any threat to the state." By court order all of the confiscated Bibles were returned to brother Davidow.

The church of our Lord is not officially recognized in Poland, but this was a great victory for the church and the truth.

### At Home:

**Joelton, Tennessee:** The nationwide "Clean Up TV" campaign which was begun by the Joelton church of Christ is gaining significant national attention. Articles have appeared in **Panorama Magazine, TV Guide, Time and Christianity Today** along with dozens of newspaper articles in more than 180 newspapers. John Hurt, minister of the Joelton church, has appeared on the "Today Show" on NBC and more recently the talk show "Donahue." The large majority of the reaction to the campaign has been favorable and many feel that it is beginning to make an impression on TV programming.

**Cookeville, Tennessee:** Tennessee Bible College has scheduled its first annual lectureship for May 6-9 with the theme being "Keeping the Saved." The lectureship will be held at the Northeast church of Christ in Cookeville. For more information write: Tennessee Bible College, P.O. Box 865, Cookeville, Tenn. 38501.

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*If you are letting a hypocrite stand between you and God, then he must be closer to God than you are.*

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# A Letter To An Abortion Victim

John Waddey, Knoxville, Tenn.

*(This letter was prepared in response to a hostile, defensive letter from a young lady who had previously aborted her baby. In it, we try to answer her defensive arguments and point her the way to forgiveness. The name has been changed.)*

Dear Fran:

Thank you for taking time to write me expressing your feelings about abortion.

I regret so very much that you had to go through the painful experience of an abortion. I know it must be a terrible burden to bear.

It is normal when people are involved in some gravely immoral act to deny the badness of it. For example, to soothe their conscience, the Germans dehumanized the Jews by calling them pigs and insects. Slave owners denied the humanity of their black slaves, calling them "niggers"; the males they called "bucks." Abortionists could never admit they were aborting a living baby, such would be too painful. So they call the victim a fetus, pregnancy tissue, a blob and deny its humanity. It doesn't hurt the conscience to remove a blob.

If an unborn baby is not a human life, Fran, what kind of life is it? Animal or vegetable? I never knew of a woman expecting a rabbit or a carrot. Every pregnant lady I have known was expecting a baby.

Who told you that an unborn baby has no soul? How would the folks from the National Abortion Federation know such? You might **hope** the baby has no soul. The fact that the baby to be aborted is alive and growing in the womb is proof he has a spirit. Scripture says "The body apart from the spirit is dead. . . ." (James 2:26.) If the baby has no spirit — then it would of necessity be dead and you would need no abortion. That you had to abort to avoid giving birth to a live baby is sufficient evidence that there is a spirit in the unborn child.

You say abortion is not killing. Before the abortion, a tiny healthy baby is growing in a perfectly natural fashion in the safety of his mother's womb. Left alone and pro-

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vided food and oxygen, he will be born in nine months and live until death occurs. Death may come at any stage and by any means; a blow, a gunshot, poison or abortion. **Kill** is defined in Webster's dictionary: "to deprive of life." That is exactly what abortion does.

Fran, your world may be "cold" and "cruel," but there are literally thousands of couples that would gladly provide a warm, loving home to any unwanted baby. Isn't it a little unfair for those who are enjoying their life to decide for another that he would be better off dead than alive? Is America so cold and barbaric that all we can offer an unordered baby is a painful death? No, a thousand times no! It is Christian for the strong to help the weak (Rom. 15:1); to help bear their burdens (Gal. 6:2).

It is a fact that some few women will seek abortions even if they are forbidden by law. Some of them will likely die in so doing. Does that justify legalizing the wholesale slaughter of preborn babies? We have already aborted well over eight million; one and one half million more die each year. Our laws restrict the sale of heroin, LSD and other drugs. Not being able to buy them at the local drug store drives many to the blackmarket where polluted products cause death. Should we therefore legalize all hard drugs? It is easier to make some things legal than it is to make them moral.

Do you know that many of today's legal abortion providers were yesterday's illegal abortionists? Then they were back alley abortionists. Today they are main street abortionists. But the quality of their services has not changed. A **Chicago Sun Times** expose reported 12 young women died of safe, legal abortions in that city recently.

It is true that China and Japan are overpopulated, but America is not. You do not help the population problems of Asia and Africa by aborting a child in America. You might however rob the world of that potential scientist who would solve the world's food production problem.

After all the arguments are presented, we

are still confronted with that solemn ordinance, "Thou shalt not kill." (Rom. 13:8.) God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17).

In conclusion, may I appeal to you as a friend? You have made your mistake. The God who gave you life is willing to forgive you and allow you to make a fresh start. I am confident that your decision was based on a lack of knowledge. The apostle Paul wrote that "Christ Jesus came into the

world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life." (1 Tim. 1:15-16.) Stubborn denial of the facts will never settle the problem in the conscience. Forgiveness is the only answer.

Your friend for Life.



## The Lord Knows

**Howard Winters, West Jefferson, N.C.**

The Lord knows! This is a wonderful and fearful fact: wonderful in that nothing we do, say, feel, or think for Him is ever forgotten; fearful in that He knows all our weaknesses, shortcomings, and sin. He knows everything as it is. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13.)

In His message to the church at Smyrna the Lord said, "I know thy works, and tribulations, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." (Rev. 2:9.) The first part of this statement reveals the fact that God knows the life, work, and hardship of His people, and He will reward them according to their work. They were poverty-stricken by worldly standards but they were rich in the real values of life. This the Lord knew. But that is not the end of the matter: He also knows the enemies of the church. Those who persecute Christians (those who inflict hardship and difficulties) do not escape His all-seeing eye.

The Lord knew the blasphemy of those who said they were Jews but were not. They were probably claiming to be the true Israel of God but instead they were the enemies of truth and right. They were blasphemers and composed the synagogue of Satan. To blaspheme is to speak evil of, slander, insult, revile. A Jew was, under the Old

Testament, a part of the chosen people. But everyone who laid claim to being the seed of Abraham was not a true Jew — not a Jew as God intended the Jew to be. Paul said: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." (Rom. 9:6-9.) Again, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. 2:28, 29.) A true Jew is one who trusts God and follows His word. After Christ came, he was one who accepted the blood atonement of Christ's death upon the cross by obedience to the gospel and thereby continued covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ as Lord. One who claimed to be a Jew (the seed of Abraham) but rejected Christianity was not true to his heritage. He was a Jew only in name. While they may have been the seed of Abraham (and thus Jews in the physical or fleshly sense), they were not true Jews in heart and practice and their hypocrisy resulted in blasphemy. Consequently, they were not true Jews. They were not what




they claimed to be.

But if they were not Jews, who were they? They were the synagogue of Satan. This is the first appearance of Satan by name in Revelation, but it will not be the last. He is seen as the archenemy of the cause of Christ — he is the leader of the host of the infernal regions who are pictured in the book as fighting a raging, but losing battle, with truth and right. A synagogue was, to the Jews, a place of assembly. The purpose of the assembly was not primarily for worship but for instructions. Thus the synagogue of Satan probably symbolizes the instructions of Satan or the promotion of Satan's cause. At any rate, the Lord knew those who stood with the devil against His church, the true Israel

of God. And from this we can be assured that the Lord knows all those who go contrary to His will.

It should be comforting (and encouraging) for us to see that the Lord not only knows our works and hardships for Him, but also that He knows the enemies of the faith, the ones inflicting the sufferings upon us. The Lord knows both His people and their enemies, and He knows them now as well as in apostolic times. And He will reward each according to his works — according to what he is. Christians will be victorious, regardless of the difficulties they may have to face; the enemies of truth and right will ultimately be totally defeated. This the Lord knows . . . and so should we!



## *Carolina Church News*

### NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Charlotte.** Providence Road had 1,200 at their Youth Advance and Marriage Seminar. Another remarkable event there was the quick sale of all of the bonds. The bond money will finance needed additions.

**Statesville.** A special contribution of \$8,014.00 was given on March 1 at Broad Street. This is to be applied to costs of renovation on their building. The previously announced gospel meeting with J.M. Powell has been postponed to begin May 17.

**Statesville.** Lee Whitaker who is now working with a mission team in Ireland will come to Northview to help with the work from May through August.

**Cary.** A Youth Rally is planned for April 24-26. Speakers will be Robert Hall of Wilson, N.C., David Nance of Cary and Michael Thornton of Cary.

**Shelby.** We join with many others in expressing our sympathy to Tom Bolick and his family in the passing of Tom's mother. Tom works with the church in Shelby.

**Hickory.** The new West Hickory congregation continues to grow. A new attendance record of 60 was reached a few weeks ago and that has probably been passed by now.

### N.C. Baptisms

Providence Rd., Charlotte, 2; Salisbury, 1; West Hickory, 1; Belmont, Statesville, 4; Mooresville, 4; Northview, Statesville, 1; Raleigh, 5; Burlington, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 6; Helen St., Fayetteville, 2; Greenville, 5. Total: 32.

### Greenville

**BRIAN WHELCHER,** Reporting: In every issue of the **Carolina Christian** there is a report of the conversions of some of the congregations in the Carolinas. I feel sure that those listed are incomplete. Perhaps there are several reasons why this is so. I can immediately think of two.

Some may not be aware of how to report the successes they have had. Others may have doubts as to the value of such reporting. This has hampered me personally from reporting what has happened in Greenville, N.C.

After attending the Freed-Hardeman Lectureship this year, the importance of reporting success really hit me. The theme of the program was church growth. Several

thousand Christians came to be encouraged and learn how they could help the Lord's church grow. It became so evident THEN the value of encouragment!

It is not difficult to report your success thanks to this fine publication. Brethren, it is not bragging either. We all know who gives the increase. I believe we all know also that success breeds success in many cases. Let's share our happiness.

The Greenville, N.C., congregation baptized 18 souls in 1980 and with the Lord's help in 1981 so far we have baptized five — three in January and two in February.

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Charleston.** The Jacksonville Road church has a new radio program, 1:00-1:30 p.m. every Sunday over WPAL.

Batsell Barrett Baxter and M. Norvel Young are preparing **Preachers of Today**, Volume V. Questionnaires have been sent all over the brotherhood. Preachers who did not receive a copy may want to contact them. Write to Preachers of Today, P.O. Box 120486, Nashville, TN 37212. The book contains brief biographical entries on living gospel preachers.

**S.C. Baptisms**

Union, 2; Northeast, Greenville, 1; Shandon, Columbia, 2; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 2. Total: 7.

**Northeast, Greenville**

JENNIFER BEAVER, Reporting: We, at the Northeast church of Christ, did rejoice and were truly glad on Sunday, March 15, 1981. We were able to witness the cumulative efforts of many mark the beginning of a new era for the Northeast congregation. Over one hundred people attended the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Northeast church building on Edwards Road.

As a congregation, we were given a police escort to the site by Lt. Garrett, of the Greenville Sheriff's Dept. After we arrived, David Martin and Dwayne Clements handed us programs prepared by Harry Tripp. Thanks to the efforts of Harry Tripp and a group of men who cleared and marked a path, we had an easy access to the building site.

The program was directed by Bob Perkins who introduced the participants. The site was dedicated to our Lord's work by Jerry Cantrell, our guest speaker from Florida. Senator Harry Chapman, who helped us with the contract documents for the new building, expressed his joy that the Lord's work was spreading to this new location. The speakers were heard by all, thanks to Gerald Kelly who provided a P.A. system.

Brother Ed Meixner was the first to actually break the ground with a shovel provided by Mr. Terry Cline, who represented our contractor, the M.L. Garrett Construction Co. Following brother Meixner, the men of our building committee, Don Buck,

*"Some people have more dollars than sense."*

**GOSPEL MEETINGS**

**North Carolina**

Cary, Youth Rally .....	April 24-26
Wilkesboro, Hugh Campbell .....	April 30-May 3
Northview, Statesville .....	May 3-7
Burlington, Marvin Bryant .....	May 8-10
Westside, Charlotte, Frank Chesser .....	May 10-15
Broad St., Statesville, J.M. Powell .....	May 17-21

**South Carolina**

W. Columbia, Wallace Beasley .....	April 26-29
Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, C.W. Bradley .....	April 26-May 1
Greer, Willie Franklin .....	May 8-9

Tom Grant, T.C. Hooper, Paul Luttrell, and Dave Norwood, each lifted a shovel of dirt. With the groundbreaking, our dreams became a reality. Completion of the building is set for early next year.

We edified one another by singing "Soldiers of Christ Arise" and raised our voices in praise to God as we sang "To God Be the Glory." Warren Martin led us in the two selections. The activities were concluded by Bobby Baker with a benediction.

God gave us a beautiful day for our groundbreaking and will surely give us the victory at our new location.

We have our beginning, but let us not forget the scriptures tell us, "The end of a matter is better than its beginning." (Eccl. 7:8.) We have much yet to do for our Lord in Greenville. Our new site is an aid, not the work itself. Our Lord directed our work by saying, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20.)

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## A Look At Books

### Johnny Melton, Statesville, N.C.

**The Authority of the Bible**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 94 pages, paper, \$1.65.

This little volume is an able defense of the inerrancy of Scripture. It is perhaps the best brief treatment of a difficult subject we have seen. The first chapter, "Jesus and the Bible" is excellent and is reason enough to buy the book. While the author deals with difficult questions in a brief way, he does not offer simplistic answers. He writes in a concise fashion, substituting substance for rhetoric. Certainly this ought not be the only book one reads on this important topic. But it is one that can be read easily and with great profit.

**Christian Perspectives on Dating and Marriage**, David W. Chadwick, Quality Publications, P.O. Box 1060, Abilene, Texas 79604, 202 pages, paper, \$3.95.

This is the finest work on the vital topic of dating and marriage we have had the privilege to read. Brother Chadwick has rendered a great service by preparing this book. There are twenty-six chapters, making it suitable for a six-month study. The first thirteen lessons deal with "foundation premises of Christian principles" and then "basic Christian principles" such as Holiness, Purity, Righteousness and Love. The second set of thirteen lessons deal with various aspects of courtship. It was written for mature high school and college students. It does not take a lighthearted approach. Rather, it is a serious study of a

serious subject. We recommend it for every young person arriving at dating age.

**"That Thou Mightest Know . . ."** S.C. Kinningham, J.C. Choate Publications, Burton Drive, Winona, Mississippi 38967, 299 pages, cloth, \$7.95.

S.C. Kinningham is a seasoned gospel preacher. At the age of seventy he is presenting this book of expository sermon outlines on the book of Luke to the brotherhood. Kinningham has preached these sermons consecutively at both the East Corinth church in Corinth, Mississippi, and the East Main church in Tupelo, Mississippi, while engaged in local work. There are ninety-eight sermons in the book. While they all are not genuine expository sermons, they are, for the most part, very well constructed. This book would be quite helpful in preaching through the book of Luke or in preaching a series of lessons on key passages in the book. These sermons exalt Jesus and condemn every false way. They are worthy of study and repetition.

**Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones**, Hazel Norton; J.C. Choate Publications, 67 pages, paper, \$2.00.

Hazel Norton is Devotional Leader for her local Extension Homemaker group which meets at Lane, Oklahoma. The lessons in this book were designed as devotionals for this group. They are presented in a refreshingly unique style. Ladies who lead devotionals or classes for women would do well to read it. Ladies' Bible Classes could use it effectively as a study guide.



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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 5, MAY 1981



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Groundbreaking in Charlotte, N.C., for an addition to the auditorium of the Providence Road Church of Christ, April 22.

Seating capacity will be enlarged from 400 to 1,050. The cost will be \$300,000. This money was raised in bond sales that took only eight days.

Pictured (left to right): Richard Atkinson, architect; Vernon Jordan and Bill Lee, contractors; David Wheeler, minister; Dave Miller, elder; David Berryhill, City Councilman; Mike Dyer, architect; Henry Reynolds, elder; and Tom Turnbull, minister. Frank DeJarnatt, one of the elders, was not present.

# EDITORIAL

## DIVINE ETHICS — NO GRAY AREA

In the church we have not put much emphasis on ethics. This is primarily caused by the fact that we assume everyone who becomes a Christian knows that he is to do that which is right and shun that which is wrong . . . and it is not hard to distinguish between the two. But things have so changed that this may not be the case anymore. Many may not know the difference between right and wrong, and even if they do they may assume that morality has nothing to do with one's salvation. So many modern moral (or perhaps more accurately immoral) philosophies have invaded our society which conclude that there is no difference in the two that many have become indifferent to the problem. "Situation ethics" tells us that nothing is right or wrong *per se*. Everything must be judged by the circumstance (situation). This simply means, in practical terms, that there are no absolutes and therefore no objective standard by which morality can be determined. The Bible is, according to this theory, not a book of absolute moral standards. Every man is his own judge and jury. This is the "new morality."

But perhaps a more subtle way to circumvent divine ethics is to put everything, or nearly everything, in a supposed gray area — actions and things neither right nor wrong within themselves. This is subtle because it has enough truth in it to make it feasible. There are things that are right or wrong *per se*. But there are other things that are neither right nor wrong within themselves — the rightness or wrongness depends upon the person doing them. But because a thing is neither right nor wrong does not mean that the doing of the thing is neither right nor wrong. Quite to the contrary. For example, Paul placed the eating of meat in an indifferent category (1 Cor. 8; Rom. 14) — that is, the eating of meat *per se* is neither right nor wrong (1 Cor. 8:8). But the person who eats it must be doing

one or the other. If one eats meat with thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:1-5), he does right; but if he eats if offered to idols (that is, eats meat by which an idol is recognized or worshipped) he does wrong (1 Cor. 10:27, 28). So while the eating of meat *per se* is an indifferent matter (neither right nor wrong), the eating of it is not a gray matter — one is either doing right in eating it or else he is doing wrong in doing so. So it is with all actions in the so-called gray area.

While there are many things which may become either right or wrong in doing them (they are neither *per se*), once they are done, the action then must be said to be either right or wrong. The thing itself may be neither, but that does not mean that the doing of it is neither. It may be the one or the other but it cannot be between the two. Thus we conclude that every act is either right or wrong as far as the individual who is doing it is concerned — if it is not right then it is wrong; if it is not wrong then it is right. This also forces the conclusion that there are no gray areas in divine ethics. Every act, as it relates to the person doing it, must always be either right or wrong.

Perhaps this needs more thought.

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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## DIVINE ETHICS — TWO PHILOSOPHIES

Man has a choice between right and wrong: he may live for and be controlled by the flesh or he may devote himself to a higher standard of life and live for the spiritual. Paul gave these two philosophies as follows: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. 5:16-24.)

Here, in the final analysis, is the only two philosophies of life revealed by God or known to man, the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Every action, as it relates to man in performing it, must be put into one category or the other. There is simply no middle ground. One either lives by the flesh or else he lives by the Spirit.

To illustrate this, let us make an imaginary chart. On a blackboard in your mind draw two perpendicular lines so as to leave three equal columns. In the left column list the works of the flesh; in the right column the fruits of the Spirit. In the middle column list those things that many consider gray matter — things that may not be right or wrong within themselves but which may become either right or wrong when they are done. Here we must confine ourselves to only two, eating meat and drugs. The eating of meat is neither right nor wrong *per se*, but when one eats it he either

has a right from God to do so or else he has no right. If he has a right to do it he does right and we place his action in the right column — it is a fruit of the Spirit. But if he eats without a right to do so (as when eaten unto an idol) he does wrong and the action must then be put in the left column, under the works of the flesh. In either case, when one eats meat his action must be placed either on the left or the right. It cannot remain in the center.

So it is with drugs. They are neither right nor wrong in and of themselves, but their use must always become either right or wrong. If used for a medical purpose, their use is right. Timothy was instructed to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and for his often infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23). This gave him a divine right to do so — a right to use wine for medical purposes. And so it is with the medical use of all drugs. When so used we must put the action under the fruit of the Spirit — put it there because the action is right. But when they are used for a mind altering effect (for the purpose of intoxication or going on a trip) they are used contrary to the plans and purposes of God and are therefore wrong. We must then put their use under the works of the flesh. While the drugs themselves may be put in the center column, when they are used, the action becomes either right or wrong and must be put either on the left or the right. As far as we can determine there is no way to use them and the action still be left in the center column. Things neither right nor wrong *per se* become either right or wrong for the person engaging in them.

To do right is to follow the philosophy of the Spirit; to do wrong is to follow the philosophy of the flesh. One must do one or the other in every act. This forces the conclusion that every action, as it relates to the person engaged in it, must be either right or wrong.

Perhaps we need to go a little further with this matter.

## DIVINE ETHICS — VIRTUE

The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit are the two opposite aspects of divine ethics. For the sake of brevity we will call them vice and virtue. By vice we mean

that which is wrong — the works of the flesh; by virtue we mean that which is right — the fruit of the Spirit. Ultimately all actions fall into one of these two categories.

Of virtue, the New Testament says: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . of good report; if there be any virtue . . . think on these things." (Phil. 4:8.) God has called us to glory and virtue, and we are to add it to our faith (2 Pet. 1:3, 5). A close look at this word in the contexts in which it is used reveals that it means moral excellence. It is the beauty of holiness (Ps. 29:2), pertaining to all that is good in one's personality or character. An unknown author has expressed it well: "Virtue is uniform, conformable to reason, and unvarying consistency; nothing can be added to it that can make it more than virtue; nothing can be taken from it and the name of virtue be left." In the final analysis, it is doing what God made man to do — it is putting created things to proper use. Virtue is therefore of God.

But to be more specific, what are some virtuous deeds? They are the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23) and the "Christian graces" (2 Pet. 1:5-7). But beside these we here list a few of the many additional ones approved directly in the Bible.

1. Honesty — the characteristic that makes one truthful, noble, and dependable. Paul instructs, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." (Rom. 12:17.) Again, "Now I pray . . . that ye should do that which is honest." (2 Cor. 13:6.)

2. Generosity — the spirit of self-sacrifice in behalf of the needs of others. In this Jesus set the example for us. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) He taught us that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

3. Purity — freedom from all immoralities. Paul charged Timothy, and indirectly all of us, "Keep thyself pure." (1 Tim. 5:22.) This virtue, though not limited to it, often has reference to man's sexuality. God made man male and female in order for them to fill each other's needs, but He

limited this intimate relationship to marriage. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." (Heb. 13:4a.) Thus God made sex for marriage and marriage for sex. Outside of this divine relationship, such activity is impure. "But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Heb. 13:4b.)

4. Faithfulness — trustworthy, endurance, and dependability. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:12; see also 1 Cor. 15:58.)

5. Compassion — a sympathetic feeling for the distress of others with a strong desire to alleviate it. Jesus showed compassion toward the needs of His fellowman (Matt. 9:36; 20:34) and told the beautiful story of the good Samaritan who also showed compassion (Luke 10:33-35).

6. Hope — anticipation of the victory to be won in Christ. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:24, 25.)

These are just a smattering of the many great virtues mentioned throughout the Bible, but they are enough to adequately illustrate and substantiate our point — virtue is doing that which is right.

This whole thing might be left dangling if we did not go a step further and discuss vice.

## DIVINE ETHICS — VICE

God not only commands that which is right, He also prohibits all that which is wrong. To do a thing God has forbidden, to do that which one has no right to do is a vice, a work of the flesh. This is the flip side of divine ethics.

To do God's will, to use things for the purpose for which He created them, is right; to misuse created things is wrong. Nothing is wrong when it is in its proper place or used for its God-given purpose. But things are not always properly used — they are put to uses for which they were never intended by the Creator. This is the fundamental nature of sin, and it is what we

mean here by vice, the works of the flesh. Vice, then, is a rebellion against God or the going contrary to His purpose and will. It is man doing what he has no divine right to do.

In addition to the vices listed by Paul as the works of the flesh, there are many others that are prevalent among us, both in the church and in the world. For example:

1. Lying — falsehood, deception, untruth. Groucho Marx (who was never known for making many serious statements) described our society well by saying, "Lying has become one of the biggest industries in America." Who could doubt the truthfulness of this? Nevertheless its widespread use does not change its nature. It is still a vice. J. Edgar Hoover said (in *The Family Weekly*, July 14, 1963), "The thousands of criminals I have seen in 40 years of law enforcement have had one thing in common: every single one was a liar." "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour." (Eph. 4:25.)

2. Cheating — taking unjustly that which belongs to another or misrepresenting the value of an item so that it can be sold for more than it is worth. Solomon could have been speaking to almost any businessman in the 20th century when he said, "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." (Prov. 20:14.) George W. DeHoff aptly observes, "It is an abomination to God for a man to have one weight to use in buying and another to use in selling." (Commentary, Vol. III, p. 287.) Cheating takes many forms (cheating on tests, in the marketplace, at home, etc.) but it is always contrary to the will of God and is therefore fleshly. It must go in the vice column.

3. Greed — the desire to get gain at any cost. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 5:10.)

4. Promiscuity — unrestrained lust. This usually applies to sexual sins. When it is used as God ordained it to be (within the marriage bond) few things are more beautiful, more satisfying, or more meaningful than man's sexuality. It is therefore pure

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and holy within its place. But take it out of the sphere for which God made it and it becomes adultery, fornication, prostitution, etc. Its misuse becomes a vice.

5. Jealousy — the unreasonable and uncalled for fear of losing a possession. When a husband becomes jealous of his wife, or vice versa, distrust replaces trust, fear love, turmoil peace, misery joy, etc. The foundation of the home is destroyed by it. Many other sins have a field day in the atmosphere of jealousy.

Vice appears to us in attractive clothing and has great appeal outwardly, but inwardly it is ugly and repulsive. It never shows its true colors . . . until it is too late. The lines of Alexander Pope are appropriate here:

*"Vice is a master of such frightful mein,  
That to be hated needs but to be seen;  
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace!"*

It would seem proper now to classify some prevalent issues which confront us.

## DIVINE ETHICS — RIGHT DECISIONS

Not every vice or virtue is specified by name in the Scriptures, and when this is the case we must make a decision upon Biblical principles as to whether to place a certain action in the vice or virtue column. Right decisions are a virtue; wrong decisions are a vice. There are issues facing us today (some of which are clearly identified by the Scriptures) which it seems that many, if not most, ignore their proper classification. As in the time of Isaiah, some now call evil good (Isa. 5:20). We seem to think that if enough of us will accept and practice a thing long enough that that makes it good, regardless of what it may be or what the Bible may teach about it. But not so. Vice is vice, even when it is called virtue. This is the very point Shakespeare had in mind when he said (through Juliet):

*What's in a name? that which we call a  
rose*

*By any other name would smell as sweet.*  
And we might add, a skunk by any other name will smell just as bad.



There are many issues upon which we must make decisions — that is, we must determine whether the act is a vice or a virtue. Space prohibits an adequate discussion of any of these, but we will note three, which hopefully will serve as examples for all others.

1. Race prejudice. What is ethically right in that which pertains to race relations? Did God intend for each race to segregate itself from all others? If not, why did He make the different races? Is one race superior to all others?

Most of us have had personal experience with race prejudice and have concluded that it is wrong, dead wrong, whether it be the killing of Jews by Nazi Germany, the slavery of black Africans, the segregation of black and white children, lack of social acceptance of a minority, or some other form. Thus we are forced to put race prejudice in the vice column. The Bible leaves no question about this . . . nor should we.

Consider these facts: every man is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 27); twice in the history of the world, all have come from the same parents — once in Adam and again in Noah; God chose the Jews (a despised people in every generation) as His own peculiar people under the Old Testament system; all men, not a single responsible person excepted, have sinned and thus fallen under the penalty of death (Rom. 3:9, 23; 5:12); Jesus died for all — every man is a man for whom Jesus shed His precious blood (1 John 2:2); all are offered salvation on exactly the same terms (Rom. 1:16), and as children of God there is absolutely no distinction (Gal. 3:28). Clearly then race prejudice is a vice, one that could have no part in the lovely fruits of the Spirit.

2. Abortion. This is not mentioned by name in the Bible, but there are numerous principles by which we can determine the category in which to place it.

By abortion we mean the termination of a human life before birth — a killing of the baby while it is still in the warm womb of its mother. The question that must be answered here is: do we have a right to indiscriminately take human life? The answer seems obvious. God gave life and only He

can authorize the taking of it. No individual has the right to decide whether another shall live or die. That prerogative belongs only to God. Thus any time one takes the life of another (with malice aforethought or without the permission of God) it is murder. However, not all taking of human life is wrong. God has authorized government to provide protection for its citizens (which involves a police force and an army) and to practice capital punishment (Rom. 13). But this is right only because God has authorized it. On the other hand, abortion is the taking of human life without divine sanction. It is, therefore, murder. And murder, both by Scripture and reason, must be placed in the vice column.

3. Marriage, divorce, and remarriage. From the very beginning, God authorized marriage (Gen. 2:21-25). This means that it is a virtue. But divorce is a different matter. God has clearly prohibited it in the Christian age (Matt. 19:3-9). It is therefore a vice. (There is one exception to this, namely, the innocent party when fornication has been committed — when the purity of the marriage has been violated, Matt. 19:9). This means that all remarriages of divorced people (except for the ones on the grounds of fornication) are forbidden. They are a violation of the will of God, and when this is the case, there is nowhere to put the action but in the column of vice. How we need to learn this. With nearly half of all marriages ending in divorce (and many of these are now in the church), it appears that we have forgotten this, or else we are ignoring it. Remarriage, without a Scriptural divorce, is a vice. And vice is a work of the flesh. And all works of the flesh are prohibited by divine ethics.

The Scriptures furnish us with all the principles necessary to make right decisions on all the issues of life. Virtue is following the Scriptural principles; vice is going contrary to them.

All that remains now is the conclusion.

## **DIVINE ETHICS — THE BOTTOM LINE**

Most of us may never have the opportunity (or the interest) to study all the fine

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points of the philosophical and theological theories of ethics, we may never explore the ramifications of each theory, and we may not understand all the arguments that are made on both sides and for each point, but there is no excuse for a person to fail to

understand and apply divine ethics. After all has been said and done, after all the theories have been advanced and all the arguments made, the sum of it all is very simple: the bottom line of divine ethics is to **do right and shun wrong.**

## That's Incredible

**David Moore, Lewisville, N.C.**

Nature never makes two things exactly alike, and that is especially true of opinions. Pick any subject that interests you and then try to find two different books that agree on every detail pertaining to the subject you have chosen. Finding two secular books that agree on every detail is not only improbable, but based upon my experience, is impossible. The Bible is a collection of sixty-six books written by about 40 men who came from a variety of backgrounds and lived over a period of approximately 1600 years. Yet, incredible as it may seem, perfect harmony exists among all the books of the Bible. How was this possible?

According to 2 Peter 1:21, "Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." They spoke "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth." (1 Cor. 2:13.) Harmony also exists between the Bible and scientific fact or principle. God is the author of the Bible by inspiration and the author of scientific fact through creation and the related laws of nature. Quite often disputes arise between the Bible and scientific theory, but never between the Bible and scientific fact. This harmony can easily be seen in the following illustration. Science recognizes five components which compose the world: Time, Force, Energy, Space, and Matter. Each one of these components are found in the very first verse of the Bible: "In the beginning (time), God (force) created (energy) the heavens (space) and the earth (matter)." (Gen. 1:1.)

There are at least thirty scientific facts which were spoken of in the Scriptures hundreds of years before they were discovered by the scientific world. How many facts are you familiar with that would fall in the

above category? In our next article we will discuss several facts which could not have been known by the Biblical writers had God not made them known through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible seems even more incredible when one realizes that it is the only book ever written that reveals the origin, mission, and destiny of the human race. God has "granted unto us all things pertaining to life and godliness." (2 Pet. 1:3.) Even so, how many people can be described as the Bereans were "in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so"? (Acts 17:11.) Remember, the Bible is the only sure guide to heaven. Read and study it daily.

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# Where Are Our Hearts?

**Terry Wheeler, Duncan, S.C.**

I wonder about us sometimes.

Money is getting to be a constant topic of conversation. And used for what? For buildings and tools and more buildings and more tools for bigger buildings and better tools to build better buildings. . . .

And amidst the noise of all the construction, a little child screams because of a terrible ache in his bloated, empty stomach.

And a ragged, worn old man pulls what is supposed to be a coat around him in the night wind looking for a bottle that will get him warm.

And a lonely, wretched young girl cries bitter tears of abuse — now in an alley, now in a dirty motel room, now in an upper middle class home down the street. And the God and Father of our Lord Jesus sees it all and grieves as sin and its stench engulf more and more minds in lies to choke and drown.

But the buildings are for teaching the gospel. . . .

I fear for us. What happens when the money and the buildings and the tools are gone? It is not wrong to raise money — even a lot of money — to build a building. It may be good and helpful. But has twice that amount been conscientiously raised (or perhaps half that amount) to **specifically help** the hungry, the lonely, the infirm, the abused, the ignorant? We as God's people have helped in the past, but where are our

primary efforts? What do we constantly raise money for? Where should we abound more and more (1 Thess. 4:9, 10)?

What would happen if we deliberately worked to lose our own lives for the Master, set upon a course of calculated (though godly) self-denial and sacrifice as an individual, as a family, as a congregation, as a brotherhood? Is there **any** doubt as to how far and fast and fervently the Good News would spread, lives would be saved, and the kingdom of our glorious God increase (John 12:24-26)? Does not our loving Master **demand** as much, even as He Himself has given (Matt. 16:13-27)? Does not the alabaster box have to be broken before Christ is glorified and the fragrance fills the room (Mark 14:3-9; John 12:2)? What if we bragged about the cross more than we did our buildings and tools (Gal. 6:14; Mark 13:2)? Some do brag only in Jesus. Will there be more?

The buildings will be burned, the tools become useless, the money gone (2 Pet. 3:10-15). But that young woman, that man, that child will plead to Christ . . . and what will we say (Prov. 24:11, 12; Luke 12:47, 48)?

Good has been accomplished by God's church. Many have been helped in Christ and are being helped even now. Money needs to be used to buy and build tools by which Christ is glorified. But no tool is to be sought, supported, or maintained at the expense of a starving child, a helpless man, or an abused girl. Lost, needy souls better get **top** priority over "building and grounds."

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:7-10.)

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# Painful Truth

**John Waddey, Knoxville, Tenn.**

Christians are under obligation to put away falsehood and speak the truth to their neighbor (Eph. 4:25). The rationale for this charge is expressed in Colossians 3:9. "Lie not one to another: seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings and have put on the new man. . . ." Oftentimes it is most difficult to tell the whole truth. It can be painful and embarrassing; it can cost you your job.

As a school boy, I remember the teacher asking if each student had done his homework. Little George gave a positive response. When we were asked to turn the homework sheet in for her inspection, George did not have a page to submit. When asked where his was, the lad had two choices: he could tell the truth and take his penalty (spanking was quite legal in those days) or he could tell another lie. Hoping to beat the rap, George put on his straightest face and replied, "I ate it." You guessed it, he didn't convince the teacher.

Even gospel preachers are sometimes sorely tempted by difficult questions or situations. Imagine a preacher caught speeding on the highway. The patrolman asks, "How fast were you going?" Have you ever felt that temptation to shave a few points off? But then that nosey officer asks, "What do you do for a living?" It is hard to tell the whole truth, isn't it?

You are trying to get rid of your old car before it dies on you. The prospective buyer asks, "How good is it?" "Would you buy it?"

Your teenage child asks you, "Daddy, when you were young, did you ever. . . ?"

A preacher is interviewing for work with a new congregation. The elders look him squarely in the eye and ask, "Why did you leave your last work?" If his leaving was completely above board and honorable, he has no problem. But imagine the following circumstances. Will he say, "I tried to usurp the elders' authority and they asked me to leave?" Or, "I was impossible to

work with. I was temperamental, overbearing, harsh and self-willed." Or, "I tried to get my co-preacher fired, but I had to leave instead." Or, "I was lazy or uncooperative or incompetent."

A preacher with one or more of these albatrosses around his neck will be greatly tempted to try to paint the false picture that really it was someone else's fault. For him to tell the truth would most likely bring an unpleasant response. Who would hire him for their work?

The solution is a preventive one. The problem must be avoided in the first place. We must avoid those words and deeds we would be ashamed to own up to. If you have made serious mistakes, repent and let the elders and brethren know of your genuine sorrow. Be willing to tell the truth even if it hurts. If you have honestly done your best to rectify your wrongs, you can only throw yourself upon the mercy of your brethren and friends.

Elders or those responsible for hiring a preacher should be concerned to ask the necessary questions to learn what kind of man they are considering. Try out sermons and one-day visits can be painfully deceiving.

Make it a policy to check with reliable sources to get the true picture of the man who seeks to work with you. Ask beyond his friends whose names he offers. Even a scoundrel will have two or three buddies who will vouch for him, no matter what. Better to learn beforehand that he is a problem child than after he has been moved at great expense and set his roots in your congregation. Of course, preachers need to check out churches also, but we will leave that for another time.



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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited By

# Johnny Melton

## Biographical Sketch



**Harvey Allen**

Harvey Chicoine Allen grew up in the community of Pungo, near Pantego, N.C. He attended the Pike Road church of Christ throughout his youth. Due to encouragement from Keith and Brenda Tripp while they were working with the Pike Road church, and from

other members as well, he began preaching occasionally during his last years of high school. He helped out with the work in Jamesville, N.C., in the absence of a full-time preacher.

Leaving high school in 1972, Harvey attended Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee. He graduated from college with a B.A. degree in Bible in 1976. During the summer before his senior year at F-HC, he worked with an evangelistic team under the direction of John Mills in the area of Eatonton, Ga.

After leaving F-HC, Harvey worked with the congregation in Galax, Va. He has worked in South Carolina since the fall of 1977, having served with congregations in Laurens and West Columbia as associate minister. Since September of 1978, he has been supported by the St. Andrews Road congregation in Columbia as the preacher for the Bennettsville church of Christ.

## Sermon

# Why, Me Lord?

**Harvey Allen, Bennettsville, S.C.**

1. Kris Kristofferson recorded a hit song several years ago entitled "Why Me, Lord?"

2. We may use the same question to reflect different attitudes with which we regard the experiences of our lives.

3. We will consider three ways to ask the question, "Why me, Lord?" Our discussion should help us see areas in which our attitudes could stand improvement.

I. The question may reflect our attitude toward the hardships of life — "Why does God cause **me** to suffer so?"

A. Job provides a good Bible example of such an attitude. (1) He lost most of his material wealth, his children, and his health (Job 1:13-19; 2:7-8). (2) His wife failed him and his friends accused him of some great sin of which he should repent (Job 2:9-10;

3:7). (3) His speeches reveal that Job was struggling to understand the why of his suffering (Job 9:1-2, 17; 10:1-7).

B. The story of Job teaches us how to face personal hardship. (1) We can always find those who suffer more, such as Job. (2) Suffering is not always punishment for sin. (3) God did not explain why to Job. Chapters 38-41 show that God has superior knowledge and power, implying that we just have to trust God when we don't understand (Rom. 8:28, 35-37; Phil. 4:11, 13).

II. The question may reflect our attitude toward assuming God-given responsibilities.

A. Moses is an example of one who might have asked, "Why me, Lord? Why do I have to do it?"

(1) Moses fled Egypt and lived for 40 years in the vicinity of Mt. Sinai. (2) From the burning bush, God called Moses to re-

turn to Egypt to deliver the Israelites. (3) Moses sought to avoid this awesome responsibility by offering excuses to God (Ex. 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10).

B. God has given us commands to obey, responsibilities to fulfill, and we may follow the example of Moses: "Why do I have to do it?" (1) We prefer that God find someone else to make sacrifices in order to finance the work of the church (Luke 14:33). (2) Surely someone else will care for the sick, the poor, and the unloved (Matt. 25:34-36; James 1:27). (3) Moses was not permitted to excuse himself (Ex. 3:11-4:17). Neither will we be able to avoid responsibility (Matt. 25:24-30, 41-46). (4) Instead of "Why me, Lord?" let us answer as did Isaiah (Isa. 6:8).

III. The question may reflect the attitude expressed by Kristofferson in his song with

regard to God's grace.

A. The first verse of the song expresses the gratitude of one overwhelmed by such undeserved love and kindness on God's part (1 Tim. 1:12-16; 1 John 3:1).

B. The second verse expresses a desire to respond to God's love and grace, especially by sharing the good news with others (John 14:15, 23; 2 Cor. 5:14).

### Conclusion

Why me Lord? Because God cares for me, and He desires that I should experience the full measure of his blessings.

*"... Now that I know  
that I'm needing you so,  
Help me, Jesus,*

*My soul's in your hand."* (Chorus of  
"Why Me, Lord?" by Kristofferson.)



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# Growing Older

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, N.C.

The story is told of a little girl who went to visit her great-grandmother. The elderly lady was a wonderful person, her hair was white; her cheeks though pink, were covered with deep, crisscrossed lines. As the little girl pondered, she asked, "Are you an old lady?" "No, honey," was the quick reply from the grandmother as her eyes, bright with an unconquerable spirit, held a twinkle. "Not exactly, but I must say I've been young for a mighty long time."

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true; whatsoever things are honest; whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure; whatsoever things are lovely; whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4:8.)

These are Christian graces or Christian virtues that we must work at throughout our lives. Virtues fortunately multiply themselves as the years advance. An elderly man in his nineties had become quite feeble. As sometimes happens in advanced years, his memory was dimmed to the extent that he no longer recognized even his close friends. This man was a devout and faithful Christian from youth and throughout his entire life. He had been unusually kind, courteous, and helpful. These characteristics remained unaltered even at this advanced age. One day a friend came to visit him and introduced himself. The wonderful aged Christian got to his feet and said politely, "Won't you have this chair, please? How are you?" The friend reintroduced himself to the old gentleman, but the kindly old man still did not recognize him. Nevertheless, he smiled and said, "Yes, yes, I'm so glad to see you." Then he picked up a box of candy and extended it to his friend and at the same time asked about his health. Even though he did not recognize his friend he still retained those outgoing fine Christian traits which had become deeply imbedded within him during his

earlier life.

Happily for all of us, while we lose the outward signs of youth, it is yet possible to retain the virtues and good characteristics that we have developed and practiced during our lives. Fortunately our most rewarding capacities for companionship, for love, for kindness, patience, compassion, etc., will not be diminished if we have followed the apostle Paul's instructions in Philipians 4:8. In Romans 8:28 we are taught, "All things work together for good to them that love God, and who are called according to His purpose."

The great majority of us cringe at the thought of growing older, but there are many advantages which come only through years of Christian experience and the passing of time. What are some of these advantages? (1) We have learned that man does not live by bread alone. (2) We know from experience that materialism does not have the last word — that life is more than meat and bread. (3) We have had much practice in separating the important from the trivial. (4) We have learned patience and tolerance, which make for clear purpose and peace of mind. (5) We have observed gratefully that silence is not indifference, and unanswered prayer is not rejection. (6) We realize that much we have striven for can be foregone without happiness — perhaps indeed, with great relief. (7) And, we have been introduced to an eternal Companion (God), whose presence is unfailing on the high ground or in the deep waters.

We must always remember that God is with us in everything. The apostle Paul suffered illness and while he prayed to God to remove this "thorn," God would not, but God did give him the strength to cope with it. We know that Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane shortly before He was to die, that if it be His Father's will, that this ordeal be removed. God did not remove it, but He did promise our Savior that He would be with Him as He went through suf-

fering and death upon the cross.

As we go through life we are moving on to a better place with God. Psalm 23, with which we are all so familiar, reads, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for

Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Jesus said in John 11, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die."

## Third Annual State Bible Bowl

**Bill Young, Florence, S.C.**

The Gregg Avenue church of Christ in Florence, S.C., hosted the Third Annual State Bible Bowl on Saturday, March 21. Teams from Florence, West Columbia, Essex Village, North Charleston, Ames Road, Newberry, and Lexington took part. The questions came from the books of Hebrews and James.

The defending champion was the Ames Road congregation. This year's winners were as follows: 1st place — North Charleston; 2nd place — Florence; and 3rd place — Ames Road, Columbia.

In 1982 the State Bible Bowl will be hosted by the West Columbia congregation. They will be advising everyone of the date and the subject early next year. It was also decided to expand the Bible Bowl and in-

clude competition among teams made up of adults next year. The adults will compete in the morning and the young people will compete in the afternoon.

We encourage all congregations to begin now to put together a Bible Bowl team for next year. It's very simple and if you would like some help in this area you might contact me, Fred Turner, at the Ames Road church, or brother Farris Austin at North Charleston and we will be more than happy to assist you.

The main purpose of Bible Bowl is to learn more about the Word of God and we feel that our purpose was accomplished this year. The Florence congregation would like to thank all who came and took part in this 1981 State Bible Bowl and we look forward to next year at West Columbia.

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# The Mission Of The Church

The Lord's church is the most vital institution on the face of the earth — the most vital institution because it has the most vital mission, the mission of preaching the glorious gospel of Christ to every creature in all the world.

If man is a living soul made in the image and likeness of his Creator (and we believe he is), and if that soul lives on in eternity — a soul that never dies (and we believe it does), and if the souls of men are lost in sin (and we believe they are), and if the gospel of Christ is the power of God to save lost souls (and we believe that it is, Rom. 1:16), then nothing is more vital, more important, in this world than the proclamation of that saving message — the rescuing of lost souls from eternal ruin and destruction. Is there any other fundamental reason it was placed upon this earth?

But it is so easy for members of the church to get their priorities out of order. In our conception this is precisely what Jesus warned against in the following verses: "And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." (Matt. 8:19-22.) While there are several explanations given to the statement, "Let the dead bury their dead," it seems clear to us that the one lesson taught, and that very forcefully, is that one must always have his priorities straight to please God. It furthermore strongly emphasizes the fact that in this life one must always put something first — one thing must have priority over all other things.

In all probability the parents of this disciple were not literally dead. They were aged and needed the care that a loving son could give them, and it was a filial duty of a son to

care for his aged parents until they were buried. Thus the disciple was simply asking that he be permitted to remain with, care for, and support his parents as long as they lived, but when they were dead (when he had buried them) he would then follow Jesus. The heart of the matter lies in this question: which should one do first, bury his parents or follow the Lord? Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.) When one chooses to follow Christ, he must put Christ and His cause first in his life — everything else must take second place. Notice in particular that this disciple said, "Suffer me **first** to go and bury my father." He wanted to bury his father and **then** he would follow Jesus. But in this he missed the whole point, just as we often do today: he should have followed Jesus and then it would have been his duty to bury his father — he would have followed Jesus in burying his father.

Jesus was therefore emphasizing to the man, and indirectly to us, that he should put first things first. Had he followed Christ (had he accepted Him as the Lord of his life) Christ would have commanded him to bury his father — it would have been his duty still but it would have been done as a service in obedience to his Lord. But as it was, this disciple committed the error in thinking that is common among men today: he separated his duty to his father from his service to Christ. As he saw it, he would **first** do his duty to his father and **then** he would serve Christ. He had overlooked the fact that one could not serve Christ without burying (doing his duty toward) his father. When one puts Christ first he serves Him by doing his duty to his father, to his wife, to his children, to his neighbor, to his community, to his job, and to every other God-given responsibility.

Evangelism is the primary duty of those who accept the Lordship of Christ. Their mission is the Great Commission. To put



other matters before it is to get our priorities out of order.

As we see it, one of the greatest dangers confronting the church in the last half of the twentieth century is the danger of being led away from its primary concern with lost souls (with preaching the gospel) to a secondary matter of being keepers of orthodoxy. While we would be the last to say that sound doctrine is not vital to the life and work of the church, and to the salvation of lost souls, we must acknowledge that the purpose of sound doctrine is not to maintaining the status quo but for man's eternal salvation. This, then, is the first and the last concern of the church — the fundamental purpose of her existence, the thrust of her

mission, and the hope of her glory. When we lost sight of this fact we become bogged down in controversies and strife about words and persons to no profit. We thus forget our very purpose of being and turn aside to secondary matters before we have taken care of the primary one.

But Jesus is still saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15, 16.) This is our mission, our purpose for being and we had best not forget it. Will we fill it or will the world be damned for unbelief. The answer is in our hands.

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## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

### On Foreign Soil:

**East Africa:** The elders at Springtown, Texas, have taken the lead in getting much needed food and medicine to East Africa, where 12 million people suffer from acute malnutrition. The church in Springtown is seeking \$100,000 to help provide for the needs of the drought-stricken area and has received, either in actual contributions or pledges, about \$42,000. A four-man team will be sent to Tanzania with the following threefold commission: (1) Carry funds for the hospital, famine and a Land-Rover ambulance (2) encourage the three native preachers supported by Springtown and also to encourage the work of Wayne and Flo Smalling, who have the oversight of the Chimala hospital (3) Conduct a survey as to the best place to send two additional missionaries to Tanzania (there are currently 31 congregations and 2,500 New Testament Christians in Tanzania). Any churches wishing to aid in this noble relief work may contact the Springtown Church of Christ, Box 96, Springtown, Texas 76082.

### At Home:

**Austin, Texas:** A recent survey conducted by Firm Foundation magazine re-May 1981

vealed that there were 27 congregations in the United States that had 100 or more baptisms in 1980. Heading the list was the Sunset church in Lubbock, Texas, with 300 baptisms. Sunset was the only church to reach the 300 plateau. Close behind was the Northside church in Jacksonville, Florida, with 297 baptisms. There were only six congregations with more than 200 baptisms.

**Searcy, Arkansas:** The electronic mass media provides the church with a tremendous tool for reaching out with the gospel. Many congregations have been using and are now beginning to use the opportunities and range afforded by the electronic media. In an effort to determine how well the media has been utilized by the church, Billy G. Brant, Assistant Professor of Speech and Mass Communications at Harding University, has begun a private survey. Mr. Brant is asking any congregations currently engaged in supporting a media effort to write him so that he might send a questionnaire to help complete the survey and make it as accurate as possible. Any congregations desiring to take part in the survey are asked to send a letter or postcard to: Billy G. Brant, Box 379, Station A, Searcy, Arkansas 72143.

# Interpretation

David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

Differences in creeds and practices among the various religious groups are frequently explained as merely being the results of different "interpretations" of the Bible. It is reasoned that all follow the same Bible, but that each "looks at it differently." The Bible, therefore, means "different things to different people." This approach assumes that in religious issues there is no right and wrong, no truth and error: only differences in interpretation.

We do not question the need for Biblical interpretation. We do, however, strongly object to a false view of what Biblical interpretation is. The popular view that most religious differences can be explained as merely differences in interpretation is based on a mistaken concept of what is involved in interpreting the Bible.

## Legitimate Interpretation

Legitimate interpretation is the effort to understand what is said and meant by the inspired writers. This recognizes that **no statement of Scripture means anything ex-**

**cept what the inspired writer meant for it to say when he wrote it.** True Biblical interpretation, therefore, is concerned with the meaning of words, grammar, and context. It seeks to know what the Bible exactly **says** and it **believes** what is said without trying to change its meaning.

## False Interpretation

A common, but false, view of interpretation is that one can assume that the Bible means anything which is compatible with his own opinions, preconceptions, or prejudices. This approach is not so much concerned with the intent of the writers as it is with making the Bible fit the mold of the interpreter. Obviously this kind of "interpretation" gives the Bible as many differences in its meaning as there are differences in people's opinions and prejudices.

This false view of interpretation may be illustrated by colored glasses. If a man wears glasses with a green tint, everything will look green to him. If he puts on a pair with a red tint, everything will look red. We realize, however, that his looking at things through tinted glasses does not make the world he sees actually that color. The tint may cause him to "interpret" things differently, but this "interpretation" is false.

Legitimate interpretation seeks to know what God has said. False interpretation seeks to make God say what one wants Him to say.

## Some Illustrations

When Philip came to the Ethiopian, who was reading from Isaiah, he asked, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The man was trying to interpret (understand) what he was reading. The question in his mind was, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" Philip interpreted the passage for him by showing him exactly of whom the prophet was speaking: Jesus Christ. Philip did not say, "It's all in how you look at it." He did not reason, "Some denominations see it one way and some another." Philip knew that Isaiah had written as he was guided by the

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Holy Spirit and that his prophecy meant nothing more and nothing less than what the Spirit intended when the passage was written. It is true that through the years many had "interpreted" this Isaiah passage differently, but they were all wrong. The only correct way to understand it was as Philip did. Any other "understanding" would be a misunderstanding (Acts 8:30-35).

The great commission statement, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ." has often been the object of faulty interpretation. In an effort to force this statement to fit certain creeds and opinions, efforts are made to "interpret" it without regard to the words and grammar the inspired writer actually used. The key words are "believeth," "baptized," and "saved." No student should have difficulty with the words. The grammar is also sim-

ple. The phrases involving belief and baptism are in the present tense. "Shall be saved" is future tense. The structure shows that "shall be saved" is the end to be obtained by believing and being baptized. It is certain that the future follows the present. The coordinate conjunction "and" joins together "believeth" and "is baptized," which means both requirements stand in the same relationship to "shall be saved."

This statement from Mark 16:16 is one that involves no difficult interpretation at all. Why is it, then, that some seem to have so much trouble with it? How do some "interpret" it to mean that one is saved when he believes, but before he is baptized? It is by false interpretation. An "explanation" is given which ignores the force of what is actually said in order to conform to the preconceptions of one's creed or opinion.

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## *Carolina Church News*

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

**by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

#### **NORTH CAROLINA**

**Raleigh.** Carl Brecheen and Paul Faulkner will conduct a "Marriage Enrichment Seminar" June 5-6 at Brooks Avenue.

**Hickory.** Two acres have been purchased in the Longview community as a future building site for the new West Hickory church.

**Charlotte.** Jerry Hurt has resigned his work at Archdale to move to the St. Andrews Road church in Columbia, S.C.

**Asheville.** A Teachers' Workshop is scheduled for June 20 at the East Chestnut congregation. It will be conducted by teachers from Druid Hills church in Atlanta.

**Carolina Bible Camp.** This year will be the 25th year (Silver Anniversary) of the camp. This year's site will be camp Susan Barbour Jones which is located in the Westville and Pilot Mountain area of North Carolina. This is about 20 miles north of Camp Hanes. Campers from age 9 up are invited to attend. The fee for each of the three weeks is \$45. Dates are July May 1981

12-August 1. H.R. Butler is the camp director.

#### **N.C. Baptisms**

Raleigh, 6; Westside, Charlotte, 1; Salisbury, 1; Boone, 1; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; West Hickory, 1; Helen St., Fayetteville, 1; Providence Road, Charlotte, 2; Burlington, 1; Wilkesboro, 1. Total: 16.

#### **Taylorsville**

**TIM GENTLE,** Reporting: My family moved to Taylorsville, N.C., in November, 1980. My wife's name is Rhonda. We have two daughters, Missy and Emily. I am a 1979 graduate of International Bible College in Florence, Alabama.

Our average attendance is 35 for Sunday A.M. with anywhere from 35-40 on Sunday P.M. and Wednesday. We are being blessed with many visitors showing good interest in the Lord's church. I have many good prospects I am working with.

We air a radio program on WTLK Sunday afternoon entitled, "OPEN THE BIBLE." We have begun a new program, "HEART TO HEART" airing Monday-Saturday. This is a 60 second spot, twice a



day. After one month of play, the response is almost unbelievable. We look for much good to result from this effort.

We have three meetings this spring and summer and one VBS. We just had a week-end meeting with my dad, Floyd Gentle. Next month, May, we will have a week's meeting with Jim Woodroff (May 17-22). On June 22-26 we will have our VBS. Then in July 19-21, a meeting with David Underwood.

## Durham

J.H. PHILLIPS, Reporting: A second congregation was started in Durham three years ago. We now have a permanent church home at 502 Latta Road in the northern part of Durham County. We would like to invite any of you coming through Durham to worship with us. Please include us on your mailing addresses so we will be aware of events taking place in our area. Durham Church of Christ, 502 Latta Road, Durham, NC 27712.

## Palmetto Bible Camp

TIM THIGPEN, Reporting: Dates of operations — June 14-July 25. There is still time to come. This is the camp's 15th annual year of operation.

The camp is building a new open air multi-purpose chapel-recreation building — 4800 square feet. The cost will be \$20,000. The camp needs financial aid. Send all contributions to: Tim Thigpen, P.O. Box 8121, Asheville, NC 28814.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Greer.** The 1981 S.C. Lectures will be held at Greer November 2-4.

## S.C. Baptisms

Ray Road, Greenville, 1; Florence, 2; Winnsboro, 3; Shandon, Columbia, 10; Chester, 3; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; Newberry, 2; Duncan, 3; West Columbia, 2; Myrtle Beach, 1; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 1. Total: 29.

# Servanthood

Johnny Melton, Statesville, N.C.

*"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. . . ." (Phil. 2:2-7.)*

Dr. Karl Menninger, the famous psychiatrist, once gave a lecture on mental health and was answering questions from the audience.

"What would you advise a person to do," asked one man, if that person felt a nervous breakdown coming on?"

Most people expected him to reply, "Consult a psychiatrist." To their astonishment, he replied: "Lock up your house, go across the railway tracks, find someone in need and do something to help that person."

In other words, sound mental health is contingent upon serving others. Do you think that is why Jesus took upon Himself the form of a servant? Think about it.

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## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### North Carolina

Raleigh, Marriage Seminar . . . . . June 5-6  
Broad St., Statesville, Ladies' Day . . . . . June 6  
E. Chestnut, Asheville, Teachers' Workshop . . . . . June 20

### South Carolina

Greer, Charles Mullins . . . . . June 21-25

# A Look At Books

**Johnny Melton, Statesville, N.C.**

**Who Will Go to Macedonia?**, Albert Gardner, Bible and School Supply, Montgomery, Alabama, 65 pages, paper, \$2.00.

This is a thirteen-lesson workbook on the subject of missionary preparation. Albert Gardner has been involved in mission work, both foreign and domestic, for many years. Presently he preaches for the Central church in Norfolk, Virginia. This book is a good study of the need for mission work. The author answers the question "Why Should Someone Go?" He deals with "Who Should Go?" He insists that just as great as the need for someone to go is the need for some to remain at home and send. Many of the lessons in this book can serve as resource material for sermon preparation on the theme of mission work.

When one realizes that the Assembly of God church has four missionaries to our one; Mormons have 13 to our one; Jehovah's Witnesses have 25 to our one; and the Seventh-Day Adventists have 65 to our one, then one can understand the pressing need for this book to be read and studied.

**The Beauty of God's Whisper**, Randy Becton, Quality Publications, P.O. Box 1060, Abilene, Texas 79604, 131 pages, paper, \$3.95.

**The Beauty of God's Whisper** is a book of sermons delivered by Randy Becton after he discovered he had cancer. Becton has had cancer since 1973, presently it is in a state of remission. The sermons in this book were preached between 1974 and 1979. In these sermons Becton speaks of finding meaning in illness by discovering the deep meaning of God's whisper, "My Grace is sufficient for you." In addition to his work as Content Co-ordinator for Herald of Truth Radio and Television, Randy directs CARING, an organization for the emotional and spiritual support of cancer patients and their families. **The Beauty of God's Whisper** is not an ordinary book of sermons. The deep and abiding faith of brother Becton is evident throughout. This book can be read with great profit.

**Help! I Need a Bulletin Board**, Pat May 1981

Autrey and Mary Hollingsworth, Quality Publications, P.O. Box 1060, Abilene, Texas 79604, 108 pages, paper, \$2.95.

This is a complete "how to" book on making effective bulletin boards. There are 100 finished ideas illustrated in this book. Bible School teachers looking for fresh ideas will appreciate this book.

**From Worry to Happiness**, Bill W. Flatt, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 128 pages, paper, \$2.95.

Bill Flatt has made a significant contribution to the body of literature concerning mental health which has been written from a biblical perspective. **From Worry to Happiness** (originally published as **Mental Health and the Bible**) deals with such areas of mental stress as guilt, worry, fear, sexual insecurity and grief. At all times Dr. Flatt upholds biblical precepts coupled with a proper relationship with God as the basis for overcoming these difficulties. The first paragraph of the preface sets the tone for the entire book. "This book is an outgrowth of personal reflection, reading, counseling, and preaching. I have searched the Word of God for answers to the perplexities of guilt, worry, fear, insecurity, depression, and grief. I grew up believing the Bible, and I have found no adequate substitute for it. Indeed, what can substitute for the faith, comfort, assurance, love, and hope found in the Bible? What can compare with the love of God, who loved us so much that he gave his Son for us? What can compare with the love of Jesus that led Him to the cross for the sins of the world?"

In a time when so many "experts" in the field of mental health decry the value of God's word and some actually attempt to blame society's ills on the sacred volume, it is refreshing to find a book that answers the hard questions people are asking and exalts the Bible at the same time. It needs to be read by every preacher and elder in the church. People plagued with poor mental health should read this book. Folks enjoying good mental health and wishing to maintain it should read this book. In short, read this book. It will do you good.

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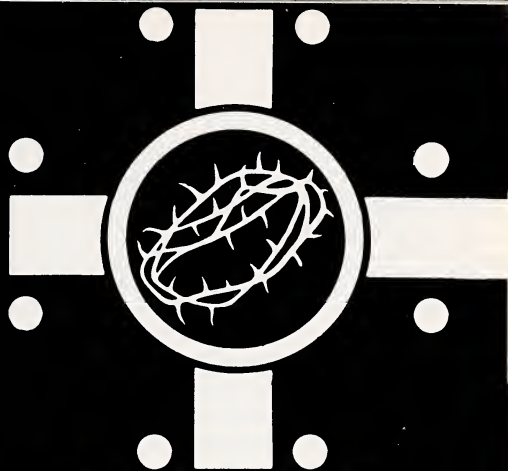
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 6, JUNE 1981



C289.21 / C292



**Groundbreaking in Greenville, S.C.  
for new church building, Northeast Church of Christ  
(See page 10)**

# EDITORIAL

## CROSSROADSISM — A DEFINITION

Crossroadsism has become an ugly word among us. It is usually used to either identify, brand, or reject a certain method of converting the lost and retaining the converted, commonly connected with campus ministries and almost invariably among youth, which was adapted and perfected by the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida, under the leadership of Chuck Lucas. The Crossroads church has not only been successful locally in developing and practicing this philosophy but has also sent out scores (perhaps hundreds) of emissaries all over the nation. And wherever they have gone the philosophy is either accepted, modified, or outright rejected — it knows no neutrality. When accepted it changes the whole structure of the church, its attitude, work, and worship. When modified, it may fit into the framework of a local church, but not without some modification of existent programs. When rejected outright, division, with all its heartaches, inevitably follows. Thus the philosophy makes itself felt wherever it appears.

But what is Crossroadsism? It is not just a campus work; it is not just soul talks or teaching others in soul talks; it is not just another innocent method of teaching the lost and strengthening the saved; it is not people engaged in intensive evangelism; it is not teaching converts to believe that one can be saved only in the Lord's church; it is not friendliness, joyful Christian living, or the overt expression of love and appreciation one for another. Rather, it is an unscriptural method of teaching the lost and retaining the saved by manipulation, pressure tactics, fear, and mind control. It is a method by which one person controls the actions of another by dictating to him non-biblical rules of conduct as to what he can or cannot do, who he may associate with (date, marry, work with, etc.), what work he may engage in, how he must spend his time, the number of devotions he must attend, how much time he must spend in

evangelism, etc. In short, Crossroadsism is a cultic method of mind control (and he who controls the mind controls the life) — a game of follow the self-appointed leader or accept the serious consequence which must follow. It is a system in which each one is ruled by another supposedly more mature than he — a system where the ruled follow obediently the dictates of the ruler.

From this definition one should conclude that by Crossroadsism we do not mean every program or person who may have been influenced by the Crossroads Philosophy or who may have studied the methods and are using them in a modified form. Rather, we mean the cultic system of mind control which characterizes the philosophy when it is full blown. We mean the practice of a program or person who totally disregards the fact that Jesus Christ (working through His chosen representatives, such as apostles or elders) is the only leader we are to follow as Christians. We are to bow to the dictates of none other. He, and He alone, has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18), and unless He delegates that authority, one is acting presumptuously and sinfully to assume it for himself. Christ, not men, is

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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the Christian's only leader. And in this, Crossroadsism is in direct conflict with Christianity.

## **CROSSROADSISM — OUR DILEMMA**

**Carolina Christian**, especially under its present editor, tries to stand equally related to all churches of Christ in the Carolinas, and it religiously avoids getting involved in local or congregational affairs or disputes. Certainly the editor does not agree with everything taught and practiced by every congregation nor do we personally agree with everything printed in the paper, this includes articles, news items, and ads. In many cases, if we had our way, things would be done and said differently. But we do not try to dictate to brethren or control them. We simply teach what we believe to be the truth. Each individual and each church must study what we say for themselves, in light of Scriptural teaching, and then act upon their own conclusions. And it goes without saying that all churches do not agree with us on many things in general and this editorial policy in particular. They, no doubt, would operate the paper differently — some would make it more conservative and some more liberal. But still we work together to build and promote the Lord's cause. This is our aim. This is our purpose of being. This is why the paper was started, and this is why it continues to live. We believe this is the way it should be.

We usually have little or no trouble in carrying out this policy, but now Crossroadsism forces us into a dilemma. There are those among us who are teaching and practicing the Crossroads Philosophy, a philosophy we deplore and abhor. It is dividing churches, good churches, and seeking to bind human rules on Christians — that is, it is denying to each the freedom that rightly belongs to him in Christ. We believe that this is the kind of division the Bible condemns, the kind we are commanded to mark and avoid those who cause it (see Rom. 16:17, 18). The division is being caused, at least in part, by the binding of human rules upon the children of God, rules that are enforced upon one before he can become a Christian and more rules he is

subjected to after he is a Christian. This is, in our conception, a grave departure from the truth. It is equivalent to binding human tradition (creeds) on the followers of Christ, followers who should heed no voice but that revealed in the divine word. Only a few churches at present, perhaps less than a half dozen in the Carolinas, have gone to this extreme. But whether the number is few or many, we cannot approve or tolerate it. To do so would be to violate both the spirit of Christianity and our own conscience.

But not everyone who is involved in campus work, not even all those who have been strongly influenced by the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida, either directly or indirectly, are practicing the Crossroads Philosophy. They have taken the methods used by Crossroads and weeded out the unscriptural aspects and are doing a great work with the remainder. As far as we can determine, this group causes no division in churches, they work within the framework of the local church, and they do not bind human rules, even though most still use a modified Crossroads method. A few additional Carolina churches would fall into this category. We cannot and we will not, regardless of the pressure brought to bear upon us, oppose those who are doing right, even when their methods are influenced by Crossroadsism.

Our dilemma then lies in trying to determine which churches have gone too far and which ones have not, and what to do about those which have without interfering in congregational affairs. We cannot promote that which we believe is wrong, and we cannot refuse to promote that which is right. But here we are dealing with methods which used in some degree may be acceptable but when carried to an extreme are undoubtedly wrong. Just when and where (or to what degree) to draw the line on these methods and at what point we are justified in withholding fellowship is, to our minds, a very thorny question (one of our strong objections to Crossroadsism is that it withholds fellowship from those who will not bow to its dictates). But thorny or not, we have no choice; we must deal with it. No doubt in some cases we will make some poor judgments, but hopefully our general



direction will always be right. We will continue to respect all as Christians; we will act only when sufficient evidence is available to us; we will bind no human rules on anyone; but **we will not promote or support** that which we believe to be sinful. This is simply to say that we cannot promote or support either individuals or churches who practice Crossroadsism as we have defined it. We will be as honest and fair as God has given us the ability to be in carrying out this policy. We ask only that others treat us with the same spirit with which we will be treating them.

This is not easy for **Carolina Christian** to do. It forces us to make decisions we would rather not make. But in the words of Martin Luther: "Here we stand. We cannot do otherwise. So help us God!"

## **CROSSROADSISM — WHAT WE DO NOT OPPOSE**

There are some things unfortunately connected with Crossroadsism that are right and Scriptural — things which faithful Christians have believed and practiced, to one degree or another, for nearly two thousand years. In nearly every cast it is not the thing *per se* that is wrong, but the carrying of a good thing to a sinful extreme. It therefore becomes vital for us to try to state the issues as clearly as possible and to show the points where tension arises. Thus when we oppose Crossroadsism, we are not opposed:

1. To the conversion of souls to Christ, either on or off the campus, either by means of soul talks or devotional meetings, or by any other method which truly points the lost to Christ as the Lamb of God, the Savior of the world, the Lord of Christians. The salvation of souls is the very purpose for which the church exist.

2. To converting young people or old in situations which may cause division in denominational or unbelieving families. The division of homes is unfortunate, but in preaching and practicing the truth, we cannot leave undisturbed families when only one member accepts and obeys the gospel (cf. Matt. 10:34-36). When only a part of any family accepts the truth, its

tranquility will of necessity be disturbed. There is no way to avoid this.

3. To involving all new converts in the Lord's work and thus retaining them by active service for Him. We believe that everyone who chooses to follow Christ, if he is true to his calling, must be involved . . . and faithful to the end (cf. Rev. 2:10).

4. To total commitment. When it comes to Christ, He accepts no other kind (cf. 2 Cor. 8:5; Matt. 6:33). Nor are we opposed to the consequence which inevitably follow such commitment, even though the consequences may have some undesirable effects on the lives of those not committed to Christ.

5. To retaining as many converts as possible in faithful service. Far, far too many who are supposedly converted turn back to the world and trample under feet the cross of Christ. We welcome any Scriptural means that will help us keep new converts saved.

6. To strong preaching or exhorting one another to love and good works. This we see as a Christian duty (cf. Heb. 10:22-25).

7. To individuals or groups of individuals, working independently within the framework of the church to build up the church. In fact, we believe that each Christian has an obligation to so work.

8. To private or group devotions designed to glorify God and edify His people so long as the devotions are conducted with the approval of the elders (or leading brethren) and under their oversight. Or when such groups do not rival the church or get into competition with it.

9. To elders ruling, and that with all the authority the Scriptures have vested in them (see Heb. 13:7, 17). We believe that elders are appointed by the church for this very reason. To oppose their rule would be, in our conception, to oppose the scheme of God.

10. To seek help and advice from older Christians who may have information or maturity to offer. While we were writing this, a call came from a distant city seeking help and advice as to how to handle a church problem (not related to Crossroadsism). We offered what we could. We believe the brethren who called had a right to do so

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and we had a right to offer our advice.

11. To confessing (in the sense of acknowledging) sins one to another. This the Scriptures clearly enjoin (James 5:16).

12. To Christians associating themselves one with another in dating, marrying, working with and for one another, or even in limiting their association as much as possible to other Christians. We have long believed and preached that "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (1 Cor. 15:33, ASV.)

While these are not all the areas of tension associated with the Crossroads Philosophy, we believe that they are enough to show that when we oppose Crossroadsism we are not opposed to the good works underlying its extremes.

## **CROSSROADSISM — WHAT WE DO OPPOSE**

Needless to say, we oppose everything we consider to be wrong, whether Crossroadsism or some other ism or schism. Right and wrong cannot stand together. But here we are concentrating on the extremes connected with the twelve areas given above. The number preceding each thing we oppose corresponds to the number of the thing we do not oppose. By this means we hope to emphasize the fact that in nearly every case (to some degree in every case) our opposition is to carrying a good thing to an extreme — taking the legitimate and putting it to an illegitimate use, which is the heart and core of Crossroadsism. Thus we are opposed:

1. To converting souls under cultic or high pressure tactics — converting souls by subjecting them to the power or control of another human being. Souls converted to Christ must freely make their own choice (cf. Rom. 14:5) and be brought under the authority of none but Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world (2 Cor. 10:3-5), or those whom He has appointed.

2. To using conversion as a means of dividing families and friends. In many cases friction and division cannot be avoided, depending on the attitude of the non-christian, but perhaps far more often when one becomes the only Christian in his family he can continue to live in relative har-

mony and peace with both friends and other members of his family. When this is possible, it should by all means be done. And in any case when there is friction and division it should not be agitated by the believer. He should be a peacemaker, not a troublemaker.

3. To high pressure tactics to get others involved in religious activity. The creation of fear — fear not to attend soul talks, not to engage in personal evangelism, not to display happiness and joy, not to follow the dictates of the leader, etc. — is the wrong approach to teach and instill devotion to God. One must serve God out of a heart of love.

4. To total commitment to another's concept of right or wrong, to a method or plan other than that plainly taught in the Scriptures, to some cultic type leader, or to a rigid inflexible schedule. Every Christian should be totally committed to Christ, but each must be permitted to work at his own pace and by his own schedule. Commitment must be one's own decision; it cannot be forced upon one person by another. This is the way God meant it to be; otherwise He would have established a schedule by which all should live.

5. To retaining converts by scare tactics and manipulation. No one has been given the right to control the life of another or to dictate to him his movements, actions, and conduct. "Who art thou that judgeth another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." (Rom. 14:4a.)

6. To binding human rules as to daily devotions, evangelism, dating, habits, time, etc. It is one thing to choose to spend a half hour each morning in a "quiet time" but quite another to be forced by an individual or group to do so; it is one thing to exhort to faithfulness but an entirely different thing to force obedience; it is one thing to be faithful to the Lord but something else to obey human rules and call that faithfulness to the Lord.

7. To an individual or group of individuals working outside the framework of the church to build up cliques in the church or to advance their special interests — that is, build groups designed to either change the church or replace it. Every action of



every Christian should be to build up the church, not to segment it, divide it, or bring it into line with some self-appointed group leader.

8. To private or group devotions to replace the worship of the church. When a situation develops where a group in the church is not having its devotional needs met in worship that is conducted after the New Testament pattern, this is a sure sign that the group is no longer interested in following the divine pattern and it is seeking something more than to obey God and His holy word. When this happens, we need not look further for a departure from the truth; the departure has already occurred.

9. To the rule of anyone other than elders. No man, except those divinely appointed, has the right to rule over another person. To do so is to assume a divine prerogative and is nothing short of a pope in embryo.

10. To have a "pray partner" whose purpose is to advise on all activities and whose "advice" becomes authoritative and whose counsel one has no right to disobey.

11. To confessing sins (in the sense of revealing them) to a specific person (e.g., a

"prayer partner") with the end in view of having him decide the method or means by which it is to be overcome, which has for all practical results the design of bringing the confessee under the control of the confessor. This is little if any short of the Roman Catholic confessional.

12. To making human rules as to who a Christian may associate with, date, how often to date, who to marry, who to sit with in an assembly, etc. Each Christian has the freedom in Christ to decide such matters for himself. And this is a decision he should make because he, and he alone, will have to give an account to God for his actions.

These then are some of the extremes which **Carolina Christian** can neither approve, promote, nor support. But further, since we hold that they are sinful extremes, extremes which violate Scriptural principles, we must now, as in the past, oppose them. As far as we are concerned, Crossroadsism has been tried by the Scriptures and found wanting. It is a departure from the truth. We therefore call upon all faithful Christians in the Carolinas (or elsewhere) to abandon it — to reject and repudiate it as a human system designed to control the lives of men by something other than the divine word of God.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:17, 18.)

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*All the world lives in one of two tents: content or discontent.*

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# A Movement To Remake The Church

David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

The Crossroads issue is not merely a question of which methods are used in evangelism. The right of any congregation to adopt Scriptural expediencies is not disputed. Defenders of Crossroadsism claim that they differ only in methods and that autonomous congregations have that right. This, however, is not the problem and arguments over methods miss the issue.

It seems certain that the Crossroads movement has the intention of remaking the church in its own image. One Crossroads-trained evangelist explained to a Christian youth that the church had been "flat on its back" and that the "old church" is "on its way out." The idea is, of course, that the Crossroads movement will make the church what it ought to be.

It can hardly be denied that division typically follows Crossroads ministers. The pattern has been repeated over and over. When Crossroadsism infiltrates a congregation, trouble will develop. In the July 27, 1980 Crossroads bulletin, Chuck Lucas acknowledged that division is occurring and defended it! He defended division by claiming that they are only trying "to infuse new life into dying congregations."

The more we become acquainted with the Crossroads system, the more we see the remarkable influence Chuck Lucas and the Crossroads church continue to have on those who go out from there. Through the Prayer Partner system, retreats, and trips and calls back to Gainesville, the adherents are kept in line. Thus Lucas' errors become their errors. As one brother observed, they never seem to be able to "cut the umbilical cord" from Gainesville. This we see as perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the Crossroads movement.

Lucas and his followers consider their system to be so vital to true Christianity that they are willing to accept division when it is necessary to accomplish their purposes. In the above mentioned article, Lucas indicates that they consider any resistance to their programs as being resistance to the June 1981

truth. He is careful, of course, in the wording; but against the background of what is happening in the brotherhood, it is not hard to see what he is saying.

One Crossroads minister said there is "splitting and popping all over the brotherhood" because things were not going to be the same anymore. He was critical of what he called the "traditional church," and indicated that what he admitted were abuses of the new methods were far better than what the church has been in the past.

Crossroads ministers presume hierarchical authority to administer the program. In defending his appointment of a "leadership committee" to rule the church one said, "As an evangelist the Scriptures give me a lot of authority to decide, and I choose not to use that authority. I choose to have a committee." He went on to say, "The Scriptures which talk about 'submit to your leaders,' 'obey them that have authority,' and that type of thing, is not just talking about elders. That's talking about leaders — period."

First impressions and surface views of Crossroadsism are usually favorable. Many have wondered what could possibly be wrong with such zeal and devotion. It has been our experience that the Crossroads people always seem to have good answers and good explanations. The problem is that the end results turn out to be different. The tree is pretty, but it is rooted in error and the fruit is bitter. And "by their fruits ye shall know them."

Some faithful brethren, this writer included, felt for a while that the Crossroads abuses had been exaggerated and that we might cooperate with those involved while they grew out of those mistakes. Further investigation and experience, however, has shown that the problems go deeper. We are not dealing merely with misunderstandings and poor judgment. We are dealing with a system, a false system, to which the adherents are totally committed.

There have been, no doubt, some unsubstantiated and even false charges made

against some aspects of the Crossroads movement. Brethren should exercise caution in what they charge and who they accuse. This writer has made it a point to be sure of the facts before publishing charges. But now the evidence is clear: Crossroadsism is a threat to the church. It must be stopped! And it will be stopped, by faithful application of God's invincible truth.

We are thankful that brethren over the Carolinas are awakening to the danger.

Many had started to accept some of the Crossroads system without realizing the error involved. Now they are taking a stand against it. Young people who are moving to colleges where Crossroadsism is active are being cautioned against this wolf in sheep's clothing. It is our fervent prayer that even those few congregations where the Crossroads influence is dominant will soon lay aside the errors and that all may stand together in the truth of Christ.

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# The Bible And Scientific Facts

**David Moore, Lewisville, N.C.**

Mark Twain is reported to have said that many people are troubled by hard to understand Scriptures; but he was troubled most by the Scriptures he could understand. People often attempt to discredit the Bible by questioning its authority. Like Mark Twain, they are troubled by the Scriptures they can understand. The realization that their lives are not in harmony with God's will, as revealed in his inspired word, robs them of the peace of mind they so anxiously desire. They question the reliability of the Bible; and having done so, are then able to rationalize their own shortcomings with little or no difficulty. Unfortunately, many who would otherwise trust in God's word are disillusioned by those who openly denounce its inspiration. Nevertheless, anyone who seeks a cure for their doubt or disillusionment should follow the remedy God has prescribed in Romans 10:17, namely, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Even someone who has a strong faith needs to obtain booster shots on a regular basis in order to remain spiritually strong and healthy.

In our previous article entitled **That's Incredible**, we mentioned that the Bible contains many scientific facts which could not have been known by the Biblical writers had God not made them known through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. These facts are evidence which supports the Bible's claim to be of divine origin. The apostle Peter expressed this claim when he said, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of

man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21.)

One of the first scientific facts that comes to mind is the spherical shape of the earth. The idea that the earth was round probably was expressed for the first time around 525 B.C. By 250 B.C., most educated Greeks felt sure that the earth was a sphere. However, their theories were not confirmed until Magellan sailed around the world in the sixteenth century. How then was Isaiah the prophet, who lived from about 760 B.C. to 700 B.C., able to speak of "the circle of the earth" (Isa. 40:22)? Magellan's voyage around the world also proved that nothing external was attached to the earth. Even though the early Greeks and Romans believed that Atlas held the world, Job was able to declare hundreds of years earlier that God "hanged the world upon nothing" (Job 26:7).

Another fact referred to in the inspired Scriptures pertains to the sea paths or lanes. Matthew Fontaine Maury, founder of the Science of Oceanography, was listening to his son read from the eighth chapter of Psalms when he heard the following words: "Whosoever passeth through the paths of the sea." Assuming that the Biblical statement was correct, he proceeded to locate and chart the principal lanes or paths of the seas. These same paths or currents are followed by oceangoing vessels today. How was David able to write about the paths of the sea in Psalms 8:7?

Due to space limitations, we will only be

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able to discuss one additional scientific fact which supports Biblical inspiration. During Aristotle's time, men held to the belief that offspring were produced similar to the production of a crop from seed. In other words, man provided the seed, and woman provided the soil. This theory was finally proven false near the end of the eighteenth

century when science conceded that both sexes made a definite material contribution. Yet, Moses made an earthshaking reference to the "seed of the woman" in Genesis, chapter three. As always, the word of God triumphs over the theories of men. Read and study God's word daily; you can depend on it.

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## **GLEANINGS OF ENCOURAGEMENT**

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# **Disciple Or Spectator?**

**Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, N.C.**

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will loses his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Of what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:24-26.)

Jesus had asked his disciples who the people said He was. He was told that some said He was a prophet, others said John the Baptist raised from the dead, others Elijah, and so on. Then He asked them, "But who say ye that I am?" Peter said that He was the Son of the Living God and Jesus told Peter that upon this confession (upon the fact confessed), His (Christ's) church would be built.

People today are starved for the real thing — there is a great gnawing for holiness. If "church membership" is Christianity, Americans are highly successful — because it is faintly "un-American" not to be a church member. Church membership is one thing, but discipleship is another. In atheistic Russia it is said that about 6.2% adults are in church on any given Sunday. In Christian America the number is about 7.6%. Does this mean 1.4% difference between atheism and Christianity? We are long on "membership" and short on "discipleship." Membership brings one "in," but discipleship sends him "out." We have the form but we need the force. We have committees but not the commitment. Church membership as such offers too

much. Where else can one find so much for so little? The church offers a white carpet for weddings, a eulogy for death, a preacher or elder to hold our hand when we have the sniffles, and free counseling when upset with our self-inflicted anxieties. Let us face it, many of us are spectators instead of participants. There is a story about a family returning from morning worship and they were discussing the worship services. The father didn't like the preaching (too "hot" for ease); the mother didn't like the Bible lesson (some of the points made were too close for comfort); the daughter thought the song leader was "off-key"; then the little five-year-old spoke up, "Well, I thought it was a pretty good show for a nickel." Too many of us probably attend services just to be there (it's fashionable and impressive), and not for the good we should get from it. Too many Christians give out of fear rather than love. Too many get their feelings ruffled when they think some member has offended them. What do they do? Quit attending services! They say, "I won't worship with that congregation if so and so is going to be there." What kind of foolishness is this? Who are we hurting when we take this attitude? Instead we should correct the difference (a Christian has the responsibility for adjusting the difference regardless of who is to blame). Read Matthew 5:23, 24 and Matthew 18:15.

The book of Acts teaches about a movement of "lay" people evangelizing the world. We seem to be afraid of discipleship. Why? Because the claims are too strong, the price is too high, and the fire is too hot!



No doubt but because of these demands too many of us stay out of the activities of the church. We stay away from getting involved. We stay away from being a real disciple of Christ. It is just too hot for us! Yet Jesus demands discipleship!

A disciple is a follower of Christ. He is also a "learner, and a pupil." In Matthew 11:29 Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." Discipleship is education. It is also discipline. When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die. Christ calls for better men, not better methods. Too long our cry has been "don't rock the boat" or "don't upset the cart." Disciples must mount an offensive! Members contribute to perpetuate rather than going all out to practice. Discipleship is an encounter with Christ. Christ is more than a set of propositions to be believed or a list of acts to be obeyed. He must be met on the terms laid down in the New Testament. We must be for Him or we are against Him. There is no "fence-straddling." Do we know Christ today? This was His question to His disciples and it is put to us now! Do we know Him? To know Jesus is far more than knowing the books of the Bible and memorizing a few proof-texts. I can quickly

give you a description of my wife or son, with pertinent facts. But would this mean that you know them? Of course not! Discipleship is conversion to Christ. This is why Christ died for us, the world was full of sin and man could not escape. In Acts 2 we read that 3,000 people were convicted of sin by Peter's sermon and were converted. Conversion however, is more than saving us from our problems; it is saving us from ourselves. Our entire personality is turned to Christ fundamentally and forcefully. Conversion is total involvement! Our greatest mission field is the church. It is a field for evangelism. Evangelism is the life of the church. Our evangelism problem is a discipleship problem. We must tell the world what Christ did for us — and for them. A disciple is the conscience of society, a witness against unbelief, and integrity against corruption. We must realize we are not citizens of earth trying to get to heaven but rather citizens of heaven spending a short time on earth.

Jesus said to Peter, "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Discipleship is an encounter with Christ, a conversion to Christ, and an evangelist for Christ.

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## Northeast In Greenville

The Northeast church of Christ held its first service on Sunday, January 3, 1960, in the United Commercial Travelers Hall with 17 members and a total of 43 persons present. A new building was completed in August 1964 on a 2.1 acre tract on Wade Hampton Blvd. (Hwy. 29) where this congregation continues to meet and worship regularly. Present membership is 166 with average attendance being 155 for Sunday A.M. services. Many outstanding preachers have served Northeast as special guest speakers and the stability of the congregation is attested to by the fact that this congregation has had only five regular preachers.

On Sunday, March 15, 1981, at noon, the congregation gathered at 3506 Edwards Road, Taylors, S.C., for the official

groundbreaking on the site where construction is to begin on a new meeting place. The building will be built by M.L. Garrett Construction Co., Inc. The completion of the complex is scheduled for spring of 1982. The first shovel of dirt was turned by Ed Meixner, the second oldest active member of the congregation.

The elders at Northeast are Bobby Baker, Ken Durham, Wendle Northam, and Bob Perkins.

*(Editor's Note: The church still has some bonds for sale to finance the building program. If any reader is interested in purchasing one or more of these, contact the church at 2414 Wade Hampton Boulevard, Greenville, S.C. 29615. They offer a tremendous investment.)*



# Editorial Glimmerings

The following is from one who wishes to remain anonymous: "A few weeks ago I saw in a bulletin published by one trained at the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida, a statement to the effect that the Holy Spirit now gives us power (meaning personal dynamic power) and guidance in learning and living the truth. He seemed to be saying that the Holy Spirit personally and directly guides us today into truth we might not otherwise be able to ascertain, or at least guides us understanding the truth of the Bible. He cited John 16:13 as his proof text. In your book [**The Work of the Holy Spirit**], however, you say that this passage applies to the apostles of Christ and not to us directly. Would you please harmonize these two concepts?"

No! We cannot. It would be impossible because there is simply no way to harmonize two conflicting views. The view expressed in our book and the view you quote from the bulletin are absolutely at odds one with the other. Both cannot be true and truth cannot be harmonized with error. We will, however, discuss the difference and show why there is absolute disharmony here.

First though it should be observed that we do not know what is taught about the personal indwelling and guidance of the Holy Spirit by the Gainesville church, nor do we know whether this is a part of the overall system or not, but everyone we have ever discussed it with who are either from there or been trained by one who is, and every word we have seen written by any of them on the subject, have led us to the same conclusion you have reached. It at best represents an extremely loose and shallow view of both the Holy Spirit and His work in the Christian system (but this is also true of a vast number of other brethren who have had no association with the Crossroads Philosophy). The article in question (and the original source was not given, neither was the author identified) is an example of how we totally ignore the context of a passage when we speak of the

Holy Spirit. Liberties with texts are taken that simply would not be tolerated on other subjects.

From the inception of the restoration movement we have stressed, and rightly so, keeping every passage in its context, both the immediate and the remote. That is simply to say that we must let every passage say what it says and not force into it more than it says. Each text must be applied only to the subject to which it is addressed and given only the sense which the original writer gave it. Anything more than this is too much. A passage written on one subject must not be applied to another. For example, when a passage on baptism (immersion) is applied to sprinkling, the context is changed. A passage which applies to water baptism must not be used as one meaning the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Old Testament prophecies of the first coming of Christ are taken out of context when they are made to apply to the second coming.

A classical example of taking a passage out of context is Matthew 24:1-36. This was originally spoken by our Lord with the destruction of Jerusalem in view. That is the context, the subject matter. But for centuries religious teachers have applied it to the second coming of Christ and the end of time. It can easily be seen what this does: it takes a passage spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and applies it to the end of the world. And while there may be some similarities between the two (at least most Bible students seem to so conclude and make conjectures to that end), one must take the passage out of its context (take it away from the subject to which it was spoken and apply it to an entirely different one) to apply it to the second coming of Christ. When kept in its context, Matthew 24:1-36 applies only to the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred approximately in the year A.D. 70.

Now what does context have to do with our question? Everything! There are three (four if you count Christ, who had the Spirit without measure) distinct manifesta-

tion or measures of the Spirit clearly taught in the New Testament. Or to quote the words of Paul, as he discusses the miraculous measures, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." (1 Cor. 12:4-7.) The three manifestations or measures are:

1. The baptismal measure. This was first announced by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11), promised and administered by Christ (Acts 1:5), and received by the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and later by the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17). Its primary purpose was to empower the apostles to receive, reveal, confirm, and deliver the truth free from all human error (John 16:13). The baptism of the Spirit was miraculous in nature.

2. The secondary or extraordinary measure. This did not come directly, nor was it administered directly by Christ, as was the baptismal measure. It was imparted by the laying on of the hands of the apostles (Rom. 1:11; Acts 8:14-17; 2 Tim. 1:6). This simply means that no one received this measure except those upon whom the apostles laid their hands for the purposes of imparting spiritual gifts. Its primary purpose seems to have been to enable others to aid the apostles in carrying out their mission. It was miraculous in nature.

3. The common or ordinary measure. This is commonly called the indwelling of the Spirit. It is that measure promised to all who obey God (Acts 5:32; 2:38) — the measure one must possess if he belongs to Christ (Rom. 8:9-11). It is the same as being filled with the Spirit, as commanded in Ephesians 5:18. It is thus the peculiar possession of every Christian. It is **not** miraculous in nature. This means that in this category whatever the Spirit does in a Christian, whether indwelling or work, He does it indirectly, through the word of truth.

From these facts, it should now be obvious to anyone who understands that the miraculous aspect of the scheme of redemp-

tion has ceased (that is, the miraculous is no longer employed by God to bring about the salvation of lost souls or to instruct Christians) that the only one of these manifestations that remains for us today is the third, the non-miraculous. Thus when we speak of the Holy Spirit as it pertains to Christians now, we must use only the passages which have to do with the common measure. To take a passage, any passage, which has in view either the baptismal measure or the extraordinary measure and apply it to the common measure is to take a text out of its context.


Therefore in studying the many references to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament we must always ask: does this passage deal with the miraculous or the natural, the extraordinary or the common? If it deals with the miraculous, then we know immediately that it does not apply to us today; if it deals with the common it probably does. A failure to make this distinction is perhaps the greatest weakness among our brethren in the study of the Holy Spirit, His indwelling and work. They fail to keep passages pertaining to the Holy Spirit in their context. And unfortunately those connected with the Crossroads Movement are not alone in this.

Now back to our question. The reason we cannot harmonize the two concepts is because the author of the statement cited had taken a passage (John 16:13) which deals with the miraculous aspect of the Holy Spirit's work (through the apostles) and applied it to the natural or common measure (which is the possession of every Christian). He thus took the passage out of context — he took a passage that has to do with the baptismal measure and applied it to the ordinary measure. The passage, therefore, does not prove his point. In fact, the only thing it does prove is that the author failed to make a distinction in passages dealing with the miraculous and in passages dealing with the natural. The Holy Spirit does not guide miraculously today, as Jesus promised that He would do for the apostles in revealing the truth to the world. He does, however, guide naturally today — that is, He guides through His law, the truth, as is revealed in the holy Scriptures



through the apostles. This distinction must be made (and every passage studied within its own context) if we are to ever under-

stand the Holy Spirit and His work in the Christian age.



# To My Son Upon His Graduation

**Jim Stutts, Jacksonville, Fla.**

I was asked to lead the opening prayer at a graduation exercise. However, this was no ordinary commencement service for me, because you see, my son, our first-born, was receiving recognition for 12 years of schooling.

As I stood before the hundreds of friends and relatives during the grand entrance of your class while the band played "Pomp and Circumstance," my eyes combed the marching line of robes and tassels for you. It was not hard to find you, and although it may have been a matter of seconds I observed you, many thoughts flooded my mind which I desired to share with you after the diploma was in your hand, but somehow the lump in my throat would not permit. So, I hope the typewriter will convey the thoughts I had during that short time.

I suddenly saw you as a man for possibly the first time. Yes, I knew you were physically growing up, but somehow parents are slow learners in accepting the maturity of their children. My mind reflected back to your childhood years when you were the one and only. I distinctly remember the ice-covered road that January birthday, when your mother requested a ride to the hospital at three in the morning. The neighbors probably remember because a snow bank had taken the muffler off the car the day before!

I remember well the first time I saw you behind that glass window in the hospital nursery. You were so tiny and your fingers were seemingly waving at me as if to say, "Dad, I'm here!" Your mother and I decided to name you after me and I hope that decision is all right with you.

Then the day you came home from the hospital, I had difficulty concentrating on my work. The day went slowly and it was a hard day of pouring concrete which required my working overtime until the

"crete" was finished. Upon arrival in front of our house, I paused a brief second listening for your cry, but did not hear it — you were the quiet type! But the thrill I had knowing that behind that door was my first son, is difficult to put in words. To say that my life was changed from that day on is to put it mildly. I felt unprepared then for the task of parenthood, and I still feel that way today. But since that day, you have meant the world to me.

I suddenly felt very old as I gazed upon your reception of that diploma. One thought kept reoccurring through the service: "Where has the time gone?" Inspired James had communicated to me that life "is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," (James 4:14), but those words suddenly took on deeper meaning as I heard your name announced. Here, I must apologize to you for not spending more time with you. I was deceived into believing tomorrow would not be as busy. Now, I see that my tomorrows were just as busy and that I should have taken the time. While I was "busy" a child disappeared into an adult. Please forgive me!

**I stood before you with pride**, in knowing that in spite of a dad of my caliber, you made the grade, climbed the ladder and finished the course. Before we saluted the flag that night of graduates, I saluted you. No one could see me do it, but I did. My heart overflowed as I saw you, so stately, so mature, so Christ-like. Because of what you are, that evening was one of the grandest of my life.

**My prayer for you.** The graduation is past as is my little boy. My prayer now is for you to make the choices in life that Christ would have you make. May Colossians 3:16 be your gauge of accuracy so whatever you do "in word or deed" may be by the authority of Christ. This means that

whether you continue your education, work, marry or whatever, that the Lord will continue to be your master teacher and that His cross will be your inspiration from here to eternity. I pray for you a world of peace which is yours as you faithfully commune with the "Prince of peace." I pray good health for you that you shall always care for

that which houses the "temple of God" (1 Cor. 6:19), realizing that "you are not your own." I pray that love may be yours and that whatever you do, wherever you go and whatever you become, that the love of Christ may surround you and that you remember the undying love of your mother and me.

## True Religion

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

Across the years hundreds of attempts have been made to define true religion. In the book of James a divine description of true religion is given.

I. To practice true religion one must control his tongue. "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26.) A true Christian must "be slow to speak, slow to wrath." (James 1:19.) He will put away falsehood and speak truth (Eph. 4:25). "No corrupt speech (will) proceed out of (his) mouth" but only such as is good for edifying (Eph. 4:29).

II. Pure religion is concerned for those who cannot help themselves. "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit fatherless and widows in their affliction. . . ." (James 1:27.) In every age God's true disciples have been humanitarians. Job delivered the poor and the fatherless. He was "eyes to the blind" and feet to the lame (Job 29:12-16). Isaiah called upon his generation to "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." (Isa. 1:17.) We can do no less today if we would please him. Every Christian must be a friend to the helpless.

III. True Christians keep themselves unspotted from the world" (James 1:27b). All of God's children will deny ungodliness and worldly lusts while living soberly, righteously and godly (Titus 2:12). Because we have been washed, sanctified and justified, unrighteousness will not find a place in our lives (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Not only must we avoid worldly conduct, we will also strive to avoid a worldly mind (Rom. 8:7).

God's children know that evil thoughts are sinful in themselves as well as the actual deed (Matt. 5:28).

IV. Those holding the true faith do not discriminate against a person because of race, or wealth, or social status. Those who commit this sin are convicted by law as transgressors (James 2:9). All men can become children of God by faith in Christ and immersion (Gal. 3:26-28). God has only one kind of church of Christ, it is multi-racial. This lesson is yet to be learned by some disciples.

V. True faith is generous toward the poor. To see a brother or sister naked and in lack of daily food and only respond with words, indicates that faith is dead and lifeless (James 2:14-17). Christians labor with their hands not only for their own needs but also to share with him that hath need (Eph. 4:28). In the judgment, the Lord will take a special interest in how we dealt with the needs of the poor (Matt. 25:34-40).

VI. Those practicing true religion are obedient to all of God's commands. "Faith apart from works is dead." (James 2:26b.) It is those who do the will of the heavenly Father that will enter the heavenly kingdom (Matt. 7:21). The concept that a person can be pleasing to God with only mental trust (faith only) is false and destructive. Saving faith is working faith (Gal. 5:6).

VII. True religion is not bitter and contentious, rather it is peaceable and gentle (James 3:13-18). How many members of the Lord's church fail here! How many preachers! As God's elect, we will put on "a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering:

forebearing one another and forgiving each other" as the Lord forgave us (Col. 3:12-13).

May the beauty of Jesus be seen in every

saint as we practice the pure and undefiled religion of our Lord. The world will be blest, the church will be strengthened, and we will be saved.



# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## Abroad:

**Nigeria:** Ezekiel Akpan, a student at the Christian Trade Technical School in Oyubia, Nigeria, has reported that 200 Nigerian Christian students have been ordered by the principal of the school to stop worshipping on the campus. The Nigerian government took over all private schools in 1975 and is responsible for appointing the principals of the schools. The man presently serving as principal of the school is a recent appointment and has decided not to follow the policy of previous principals, who allowed the Christians enrolled in the school to worship on the campus. As a consequence, the students and other Christians in the village are now worshipping in a small mud building that is inadequate for the needs of the church. However, they are now in the process of raising \$65,000 for a new building.

**China:** According to a report by the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, slightly more than 500 souls have been recently converted in two large Chinese cities, Tientsin and Canton. As a result of the preaching of the gospel by Stephen Ma there were 52 conversions in Tientsin and 482 in Canton.

## Nationally:

**Richmond, Virginia:** The Fifth Annual Eastern States Evangelism Workshop will be conducted June 18-20. The workshop is hosted by the Colonial Heights church in Richmond and will be held on the campus of the University of Richmond. The theme is The Power to Be. For additional information call (804) 526-5286.

**Nashville, Tennessee:** The 1981 Summer June 1981

Lectures at David Lipscomb College will be held June 14-17. Chosen as the theme for the lectures is the Restoration of New Testament Christianity. Evening lecturers are Bobby Duncan, Rubel Shelley and John Gipson.

**Madison, Tennessee:** The Amazing Grace Bible Class, a television outreach of the Madison church of Christ, will celebrate its tenth anniversary in July. Described as "the world's largest Bible class," the program is now seen in almost 300 cities in the United States and in several foreign countries. Ira North, minister of the Madison church and editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, has been the speaker on the program from its inception.

**Knoxville, Tennessee:** A World's Fair, EXPO 82, will be held in Knoxville, May-October of 1982. The city expects 11 million visitors to the fair from around the world. Recognizing the tremendous evangelistic opportunities for such an event, the Laurel congregation in Knoxville has agreed to oversee an exhibit designed to reach out to those visitors from around the world. The outreach will be similar to that conducted by our brethren at the New York World's Fair in 1964-65. In that effort there were over 2500 baptisms, thus benefitting the church around the world. The exhibit will be an enormous undertaking and the initial projected costs of the project are at least \$600,000. \$140,000 has already been pledged to the effort. Other churches wishing to help with this major evangelistic outreach may contact the Laurel church of Christ, P.O. Box 10683, Knoxville, Tennessee 37919.



# Determination

Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, N.C.

The word "determination," as we are using it here, will have the dictionary definitions of "a firm intention, the quality of being resolute; firmness of purpose." We might just call it the grip or grit to stick. But regardless of what it may be called, it takes a stable amount to get any worthwhile job done.

In most cases, when there is a task to be performed, there are plenty of starters but very few finishers. The finishers are the only ones with determination. Although we believe that Mahomet was a false prophet, we can learn at least one thing from him. It is reported (Carlyle's lecture on Mahomet) that when Mahomet first began his teaching he gave offense to nearly everyone. Abu Thaleb, his uncle, spoke to him about this matter saying, "Could you not be silent about this? Believe it yourself if you wish, but do not trouble others, anger the chief men, and endanger yourself and family by teaching it." Mahomet replied, "If the sun stood on my right hand and the moon on my left, ordering me to hold my peace, I could not obey!"

This kind of determination is what has led multiplied millions to trust their souls to his teaching. It is the kind of determination that anyone who makes a contribution to the world must have. The apostles of Christ and the early Christians had their share of it. They felt that they had a message to present (the good news of salvation through Christ), the presenting of which was more important than life itself. As they stood before the high court in Jerusalem, Peter

and John were prohibited from preaching or teaching any more in the name of Christ. This is one time when the court rendered the decision but the defendants gave the verdict. "Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19, 20.) The grandeur of their mission made silence a crime. But our mission is no less today.

## Conviction

Determination must arise out of a deep conviction. A person who does not have a faith worth sacrificing all for, even life itself, is not likely to have convictions deep enough to provide the inter compulsion necessary to drive him on in his cause against all odds or when the winds are contrary. The kind of conviction necessary for determination can be seen in Martin Luther when he stood before the Diet of Worms, where the great men of the earth, led by the powers of Catholicism, demanded that he retract his teaching — retract the very fundamentals of the Reformation! Luther replied in unforgettable words: "Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by the clearest reasoning — unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted — and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the Word of God, **I cannot and I will not retract**, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience.' And then, looking round on this assembly before which he stood, and which held his life in its hands, he said: 'Here I stand, I can do no other; May God help me! Amen!'" (D'Aubignes History of the Reformation.) This is the kind of conviction which produces determination. This is the kind that led Paul to say, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Tim. 1:12.)

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## Concern

Conviction which is strong enough to instill determination must be saturated with concern — concern centered not in self but in others. The following touching and beautiful story, told by Eldred Echols, will illustrate this point:

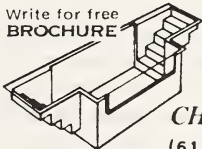
"He was a gentle little man of Rhodesia who came to Tanganyika Bible School one day, mid-term, and said he had come to learn the Word of God. It was explained that all the student quarters were full and there was just no room, 'Unless,' we added as a joke, 'you want to stay in the chicken house.' 'But that will do splendidly,' he said earnestly! And thus he entered the Bible school, became a devoted student, and often his little study lamp burned through the night as he strove to catch up with other students.

"Then one day he disappeared. Efron Mronga was found a few days later crumpled beside the mountain trail that leads from the vast Usangu Plains to the Bible School. He had been preaching to the barbarians of the plains. He had found a famine there and the people had no food to spare for a stranger; yet he had preached from village to village for days without eating. On the way back to school he had collapsed from hunger, and passing students found him and carried him back to school. When he regained consciousness his first words were, 'There are some people out there on the plains who love God very much.' " If we all had this kind of concern, what could stand in our way — what could dampen our determination? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31.)

We conclude then that every Christian should develop a sympathetic concern for lost souls, have an inalterable conviction that Christ is the answer, and with firmness determine to preach the gospel to every creature. The great commission is still our mission — it is still the heart of the Christian religion. But our determination should not end here: it should extend to every aspect of Christian living. Nothing must be permitted that would prevent us from serving our God in every situation of life. "We are not of those who draw back into perdi-

tion; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." (Heb. 10:39.) Such a determination is not for the weak-hearted or doubters — not for those who quibble over the meaning of God's divine word; it is for those who stand, having done all to stand.

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# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Statesville.** In a recent bulletin from Northview, there was a comparison in attendance figures between a year ago and the present. Attendance had almost doubled.

**Raleigh.** Dan Allison, campus minister, has announced his plans to go to Abilene Christian University to work on a M.A. degree.

**Washington.** A newsletter from Paul Ditoro reports progress in the work. They are finding Bible Correspondence Courses to be particularly effective. Gilbert Tripp preached in their recent Gospel Meeting.

**Charlotte.** Tom Turnbull, campus minister at Providence Road, recently announced his plans to relocate in New Jersey.

### N.C. Baptisms

Westside, Charlotte, 3; Providence Road, Charlotte, 11; Abilene, Statesville, 1; Raleigh, 8; Salisbury, 2; Wilkesboro, 3; Burlington, 1; Boone, 1; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 4. Total: 34.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**Rock Hill.** C.W. Bradley preached in a Gospel Meeting at Charlotte Avenue. There were 5 baptisms during the meeting and 4 more on the weekend following. Another meeting is scheduled for August 6-9 with Don McWhorter speaking. Jane McWhorter will teach classes for ladies on August 8.

### S.C. Baptisms

Greenwood, 1; Florence, 4; Northeast, Greenville, 1; Duncan, 2; Essex Village, Charleston, 2; Union, 2; Central, Spartanburg, 6; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 11; Crawford Rd., Rock Hill, 2. Total: 31.

### Laurens

**DOUG MILLIGAN**, Reporting: The church in Laurens will be involved in a three-week campaign beginning June 7th through the 26th. Workers will be coming from the Westwood church of Christ each week of the campaign to help in the door-to-door effort. The Westwood congregation is located in McMinnville, Tennessee, and has provided support for the Laurens congregation since the work began.

The theme of the campaign is "Answers to Life's Greatest Questions." The three-week effort has three primary goals. First, we hope to obtain a survey of the religious beliefs of the people in the Laurens area in order to target our radio work more effectively. Secondly, we will attempt to establish Bible studies with those with whom we come in contact. Our final objective is to invite people to attend the Gospel Meeting that has been planned for the week of June 21-25. Brother Harold Jones of Beaumont, Texas, will be speaking on the same theme, "Answers to Life's Greatest Questions." We wish to invite all of our brethren to attend any of these services. The lessons will begin each evening at 7:30. We ask also the prayers of our brethren on behalf of the success of our labors.

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### North Carolina

E. Chestnut, Asheville, Teachers' Workshop ..... June 20  
W. Jefferson, Campagn ..... June 20-July 12

### South Carolina

Laurens, Harold Jones ..... June 21-25  
Allendale, Sid Fulford ..... July 12-17



## AUSTRALIAN CAMPAIGN

**Ed Glover, Jacksonville, N.C.**

Dedicated Christians needed for a campaign to Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. The dates are October 5 through November 3, 1981. We hope each worker can work at least two weeks. This is a well-planned, well-organized, and well-timed campaign.

Hobart is the beautiful state capital of Tasmania. One hundred and sixty to two hundred thousand people live in the area. The church there has a small but nice building. The Christians are dedicated and the congregation is served by two good preachers. Rod Rutherford and John Whitson, both sponsored by the Crieve Hall church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee. It is planned that two missionary apprentices

from David-Lipscomb College will be there. This will make for four full-time follow-up workers, plus the congregation.

This will be a door knocking campaign using the Open Bible Study method. Doors will be knocked six out of seven days. It is not a vacation!

If you are interested in the campaign, then please contact the directors very soon.

Ed Glover is the director. He served from 1971 to 1977 in Australia, mostly in Hobart. His address and phone number are P.O. Box 299, Jacksonville, N.C. 28540; 1 (919) 347-1805.

Don Treadway will be the co-director. His address and phone number are 657 North Revere Road, Ackron, Ohio 44313; 1 (216) 836-5167.

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## Editorial Book Views

**Sermons on the Ten Commandments**, John Stacy, J.C. Choate Publications, Burton Drive, Winona, Mississippi 38967, 110 pages, cloth, \$5.00.

This is an excellent study of a neglected subject. Often in our haste to prove that the Law of Moses (and therefore the Ten Commandments) is not binding today, we fail to appreciate the wisdom found in the Old Testament in general and in the Decalogue specifically. In this study of the Ten Commandments John Stacy offers thirteen sermons. "The Story" describes the circumstances surrounding the giving of the Law at Sinai. "Misconceptions" discusses some commonly held views of the Decalogue which are erroneous. "Truths" sets out the true nature of the Ten Commandments and the purpose God had in giving them. Following these three introductory sermons, a sermon on each of the Commandments is given. All of the lessons are well researched and reasoned through. They are well organized. For each sermon the author presents a skeleton outline and a full manuscript. This book deserves to be read and its contents preached from our pulpits.

**The Indwelling of Diety**, Maurice W. Lusk, III; Southeastern Biblical Institute, 3545 Chestnut Dr., Doraville, GA 30340; 106 pages, paper \$4.50.

June 1981

A considerable number of books have been written in recent years discussing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but in our judgment this one is the clearest, the most reasonable, the most logical, and the most precisely stated to yet come from the press. The author forcefully concludes that the Spirit dwells in Christian through and only through the word of God. His style is to lay a solid Scriptural foundation and then draw his conclusion from it. (In fact, the book would make a good textbook on how to logically arrive at Scriptural conclusions.) In so doing he totally and absolutely refutes the concept that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian directly, personally, and apart from the truth. In fact, its thesis is to show the utter impossibility of a personal indwelling without making the receiver deity. We consider this **must** reading for those who wish to have a clear concept of the Spirit's indwelling through the truth.

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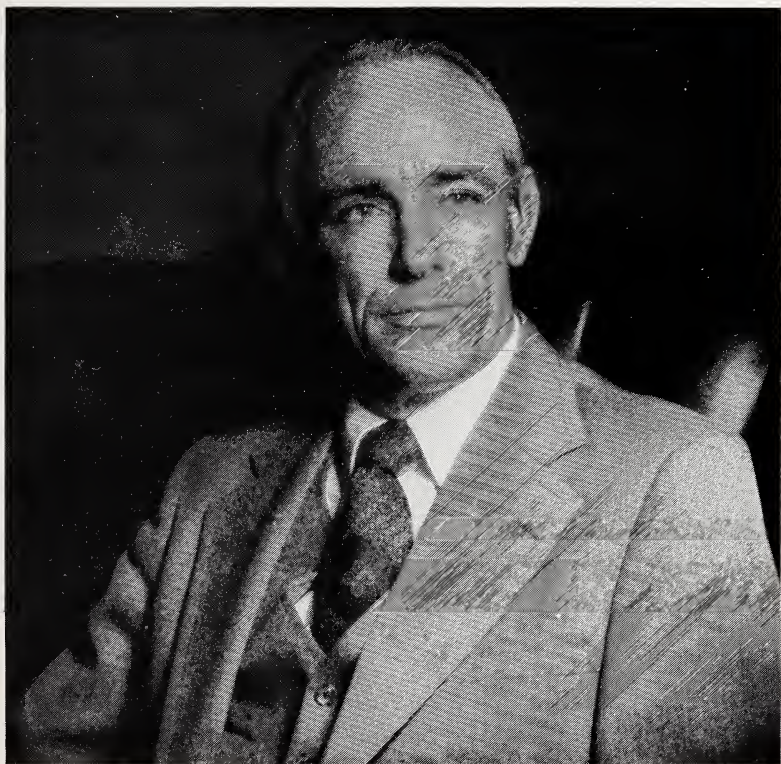
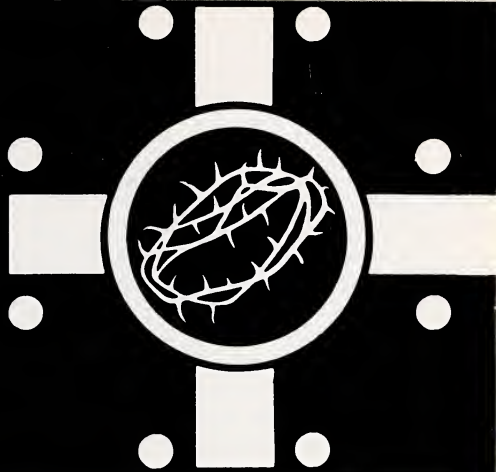
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 7, JULY 1981



**JAMES MEADOWS**  
(See page 7)

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# EDITORIAL

## THAT RED SPOT

It is said that Napoleon Bonaparte once spread a large map of the world out before him on a table. On the map the British Isles had been printed in red. Pointing his finger at them, Napoleon said to those around him, "If it were not for the red spots I could conquer the world."

This reminds us of the work of the devil and all the host of hell. As he plans his strategy to conquer the souls of men, there is a huge red spot on his map . . . the cross of Calvary! The devil can truthfully say to his helpers, "Had it not been for that red spot I would have conquered the world." And indeed he could have. But that red spot has robbed him of the victory. It stands squarely in his way. Unfortunately, however, he still conquers many souls because they are not under the blood. It is available to everyone (1 John 2:2), and all can conquer under its banner, but all do not apply its divine cleansing power to their lives — they continue to serve a defeated master and are thus on the losing side. But for those who submit to heaven's rule that red spot makes ultimate victory certain: for they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (cf. Rev. 7:14).

## WE NEED LOVE

The Restoration Movement was conceived in and continues to thrive on the concept that all of God's people can be united on the Bible and the Bible alone. No other rules are needed — in fact, rules other than those imposed by God divide rather than unite. While it is true that the movement has been divided over many things, there has never been and absolutely cannot be a question about the fact that if God wills unity (and He does, John 17:20, 21; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-6) the only grounds upon which it can be attained is on the Scriptures. No other grounds are possible if the purity of primitive Christianity is maintained. And so the concept of the restoration leaders

was absolutely correct. They set us on the right course. And over the years we have followed their example by putting emphasis on organizational unity (all being members of the one body) and doctrinal unity (everyone speaking the same things, speaking only as the oracles of God speaks). Both these are essential to a united church, and we must not forget it. But perhaps in our emphasis of these grand principles we have overlooked one vital and necessary ingredient to Scriptural unity, namely, **love**, love one for another . . . as well as love for God.

In the absence of love organizational and doctrinal unity will be utterly useless if not totally impossible, and to whatever degree it is attained it will be cold, dry, and lifeless. On the other hand, with deep abiding love, New Testament love, organizational and doctrinal unity will be joyful, vital, enthusiastic, warm, and far more easily attained. There are few reasons (sufficient or necessary) to cause those who devoutly love one another to divide. They may have many differences in personality, opinion, motives, and methods, but love still binds them together. Thus when division comes over non-essential matters, it is not the matters which cause it in most cases, but a lack of

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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love. It is no marvel then that Paul urged us to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

*Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.*

## PROFANITY A SIN

Profanity has become so widespread, so much a part of our every day speech, probably as a result of its profuse use in books, movies, and television, that few, very few, think of it as harmful any more, much less a sin of extraordinary magnitude. But the widespread acceptance of it has not, and cannot, change its evil nature.

We have often argued on these pages that sin is a misuse of created things. We believe that God made everything for a purpose. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31.) When utilized for the purposes for which they were made, everything is right. But on the other hand when they are used for purposes other than that for which they were made, purposes contrary to the will of God, they are sinful. For example, God made food to be eaten. Paul said, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." (1 Tim. 4:4, 5.) To receive food with thanksgiving is to recognize the source from which it ultimately comes — to recognize and honor God as the supplier of all good things. Food thus received and eaten is right. But a misuse of food or to eat it in overabundance is gluttony, and gluttony is wrong. That which is right when used properly is wrong when it is misused.

God made man with the ability to communicate his thought by means of words. Thus God gave man languages, but He had a divine purpose in doing so. Speech was designed to glorify God and edify man. When so used it is right and a far reaching blessing to both man and the world in which he lives. But profanity is used to profane the high and holy name of God, to blaspheme it rather than praise it. This is a misuse of speech, a use contrary to the

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plans and purposes of God. Profanity is, therefore, a sin.

## "I WILL GO"

Abraham, when he was very old, sent his oldest servant to Mesopotamia (his ancient country and people) to secure for his son Isaac a wife. The servant went to the city of Nahor where he met and chose Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. After making arrangements with the family for the marriage, the mother and brother of Rebekah said, "We will call the damsel, and require at her mouth." When asked if she would go with Abraham's servant and thus become Isaac's wife, Rebekah replied decisively, "I will go." (See Gen. 24:1-55.)

When seen in its full ramifications, the statement "I will go" forcefully emphasizes the commitment of marriage.

1. Rebekah would go and become Isaac's wife, even though it meant leaving her parents, family, and friends, never to see them again in this life. Marriage was to her a complete break with the past and a total commitment to the future. So should it be now. Jesus said, because God had made them male and female, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh." (Matt. 19:5.)

2. She would go even though she had to leave her country and live the remainder of her life in a new one. She was committed to Isaac and his country must now become her country. This reminds us of the beautiful statement of Ruth, which is often quoted (or sung) in wedding ceremonies: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." (Ruth 1:16, 17.) This was the commitment of Ruth to her mother-in-law, but it is also the commitment of marriage.

Sometimes we hear someone lament the lot of the wives of missionaries. It is usually

said, "They did not choose that kind of life and that uncivilized country; it was chosen for them." Perhaps so, but they did choose their men, and their men chose to be missionaries. And their commitment to marriage said in essence, "I will go."

3. She left her heritage — that is, she gave up all claims to the family inheritance and all the advantages of what might have fallen to her socially and culturally in her own country. "I will go" meant "I will leave everything for Isaac." Nothing was expected and there was no turning back — no provisions were made for anything else. She would become bone of Isaac's bones and flesh of his flesh. With such a commitment, separation or divorce would be absolutely unthinkable. The commitment was "I will go." No ifs or ands or buts about it. So it should be in all marriages now.

In marriage today, too many people commit themselves to trying marriage to see if it will work, and when the excitement of passion dies down they say "love" is gone and the marriage is terminated. Provisions were made to turn back . . . and nearly fifty per cent do! What we need now, more than anything else, to stem the tide of the divorce evil is more people with the commitment of Rebekah, "I will go." Period. A lifetime commitment to which there is no Scriptural way to turn back short of previous sin.

## THE PROFESSIONALS

We have never been overly sold on a professional ministry, although we are coming closer and closer to practicing it in the Lord's church. The preachers are pretty well becoming the leaders in most churches — they are the jacks of all trade. They are better trained (or so we are told), know more about the Bible, represent the church in the minds of the community, teach the most important classes, counsel the troubles, give advice on all kinds of problems, etc. In short, they have become professionals in their trade.

Do not misunderstand us: we are not against well trained preachers. In fact, no one can preach effectively without being well trained in the word of God. What we are against is professionalism — that is,

thinking that no one can effectively do the work of God without being a professional. We believe that the true test of any man should be, not his educational standard or where and by whom trained, but whether or not he does the job. Some of the best practical workers we have known in the kingdom are men untrained by any school and who would be hard pressed to pass any kind of professional standard. They know the word and they preach it. Of course they are not usually widely known because they do not write for the papers, speak on lectureships, hold numerous meetings, parade the books they have written, or otherwise promote the work they are doing. They just go about converting souls and building up the churches where they are.

We were strongly reminded of such workers recently. We drive a Dodge Colt. It has 87,000 miles on it. The oil pressure light suddenly started blinking on and off. We assumed that because of the mileage on the motor, we had internal and serious trouble. We took it to the Dodge place where we had originally purchased it and asked them about the problem. They were supposed to be the professionals and we had been advised to bring it back to them when trouble developed. We were informed that there was no way to determine the problem without pulling the motor and taking it down. And once this was done it would need to be completely rebuilt. The cost: between \$800 and \$1000. As usual, we did not have that kind of money and did not know where to get it. So we went home and called a country mechanic (one we would all call illiterate — he could not even spell garage, even though he owned it) and told him about our woes. He said, "Bring it over and let me check it." We did. He checked it, found the problem (it was the oil light switch), and would have fixed it but the switch was not available. The cost: \$2.

In this case, the professionals would have only added to our problem; a man who knew little but how to fix cars solved it. We wonder sometimes if such is not also true in the church. But whether it is or not, we believe every man ought to be judged by the effectiveness of his work, and not by some artificially imposed academic standards.

Carolina Christian



# Borderline Christianity

**George C. Carlisle, Vernon, Ala.**

The spread of the kingdom is hampered when we practice borderline Christianity. The early Christians wanted to maintain the glorious gospel within the borders of Judea. Through the providence of God we find; "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus." (Acts 11:19-20.) It was persecution which caused the early Christians to scatter beyond their borderline with the gospel.

It is God's design that the gospel, our Christian influence, penetrate the borders of our cities, go beyond the borders of our state. "God bless America," is fine, but Christianity is to even go beyond our national borders. "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the utter most part of the earth." (Acts 1:8.)

## **A Narrow View**

When we practice borderline Christianity we are taking a narrow view of the great commission. Jesus says, "Go ye into **all** the world, and preach the gospel to **every** creature." (Mark 16:15.) When we select to go only to those that are in our community, or only to those of a particular state, are not we then practicing borderline Christianity? We need to be concerned first of all with the lost where we are (Acts 1:8). But this same verse also teaches our concern is not to be with the exclusion of lost souls in other areas.

## **A Sad Situation**

In the state of South Carolina there is one county with a population of 30,000 without a single congregation of God's people. There is another county of 12,000, another of 18,000, another of 34,000, all without congregations. In all there are some nine

counties where the Lord's Church does not exist. This writer is very saddened to find brethren not willing to contribute to this neglected area, because it is not within their target state for mission work, or their interest happens to be in another country.

As we consider the things we can do, or cannot do, we may right now be satisfied that we are doing all that is possible in reaching the lost. But consider brethren this one question with me . . . Who is responsible for reaching all those lost souls in South Carolina, if we are not?

## **Action**

Men are ready right now to move and begin working in the most neglected area of the state. Men who realize the lost cannot call on Him in whom they have not believed, neither can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard. Men are ready to move who realize the people cannot hear without a preacher. But the reality is: "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:15.)

If you are willing to go beyond the borderline into the state of South Carolina, prayerfully, physically, or financially, please let us hear from you. Contact any of the following: Vernon Church of Christ, c/o The Elders, P.O. Drawer 0, Vernon, AL 35592 (205) 695-9755; Benjamin J. Barr, 1786 Kolb Road, Sumter, S.C. 27801 (803) 481-3631; George C. Carlisle, P.O. Box 666, Vernon, AL 35592 (205) 696-9058.

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## **LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY? WE CAN HELP THEM!**

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**American Military Evangelizing Nations**

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# Life Is Too Short

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

As people get older they often remark about "how time flies." Time is the same for young and old, but as we get older we tend to become more conscious of the swift passage of our lives.

Job said, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." (7:6.) The Psalmist said, "He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again." (78:39.) James wrote that life is "even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (4:14.)

We mention this to emphasize that **life is too short** for us to deliberately pass by the opportunities for joy and enrichment that come our way. It is not so much that others deprive us of happiness, but that we deprive ourselves. It is tragic that some miss so many of the good things of this world simply because they will not allow themselves the pleasure.

**Life is too short to neglect friendships.** No one has too many friends and no friendship is of negligible value. Probably every day there are opportunities for making and strengthening relationships with others. A stranger today could be a brother tomorrow.

**Life is too short to neglect fellowship with Christian friends.** The public and private occasions when we can be together to share interests, to share laughter, and to show affection are blessings from God. We realize that even the most gregarious persons need some time to be alone. We also realize that the opportunities will soon be

gone. Faces we remember from past times are not seen anymore. Their cherished voices and pleasant laughter are absent now. We can deprive ourselves of so much by refusing to be a part.

**Life is too short to entertain bad attitudes.** Sometimes it happens that someone will get upset or cross about something and let a sore fester within them for months and even years. Their chief satisfaction is the satisfaction of being consistently miserable. This does, of course, affect and hurt others, but the worst injury is to themselves. Time is too short and life too precious to be ruined by unchristian attitudes.

**Life is too short to refuse the opportunities to do good for others.** The building blocks of a meaningful life are kind words and helpful deeds. Most people think of this after it is too late. Perhaps the one time many of us think Jesus may have been mistaken was when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35.) Our own selfishness can rob us of great blessings.

**Life is too short to neglect opportunities for spiritual enrichment.** One who feels he can live a consecrated life without much help simply does not understand the Christian life. Bible classes, special services, literature, etc., are not intended as activities just for people with nothing to do. It is a sad irony that so often those who most need help are the ones who deny themselves such opportunities.

**Life is too short to fail to speak to others about the Saviour.** We are a dying race and very soon our friends and ourselves will all be gone. Gone to where depends totally upon our relationship to Christ. This life affords no greater privilege than the privilege of helping another be saved. But worldly pride, selfishness, indifference, and lack of preparation are keeping us from even trying. Too soon we will watch our neighbors perish. Too soon we will "go and empty-handed."

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Ps. 90:12.)

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# James Meadows

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.**

When James Meadows moved from Jackson, Tennessee, to Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1975 the Carolinas gained a preacher of remarkable ability.

James is the able minister of the Central congregation in Spartanburg. Working with an excellent eldership and cooperative congregation, James has helped make Central a work that is known for its growth, for a diversified program, and for soundness in the faith.

Brother Meadows was born in 1930 in Cuba, Kentucky. His mother, Maggie Meadows, continues as a faithful Christian in the same area. His father died when James was nine years old. At the age of 14, James surrendered to the Lordship of Christ, being baptized by Fred Chunn at the Lebanon church near Sedalia, Kentucky.

After completing studies at Freed-Hardeman College in 1955, James began full-time work with the church in Middleton, Tennessee. His work was in Weir, Kentucky, in 1960-61. Twelve fruitful years were spent with the East Chester Church of Christ in Jackson, Tennessee.

Those who are familiar with Meadows' preaching know of the thoroughness with which each lesson is prepared. His ability to memorize the material to be presented is remarkable. His reputation for scholarship and soundness has brought him numerous invitations to participate on lectureships. Some of these programs have been the Carolina Lectures, Freed-Hardeman, Harding, Memphis School of Preaching, Harding Graduate, David Lipscomb, and the Fort Worth Lectures. He also holds four to six meetings each year.

The same diligence and scholarship has resulted in 24 books for class studies. Included are books on the Holy Spirit, "Guidance for Greater Service," Calvinism, discipline, religious errors, and various sections of the Bible. James writes for several brotherhood publications and is the current author of the "Gospel Advocate Senior Quarterly."

For several months a Preachers' Work-  
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shop has been held each month at the Charlotte Avenue church in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Brother Meadows has been the key instructor at each of these sessions. Preaching brethren have learned to appreciate both the depth of his knowledge and the wisdom of his advice.

In Spartanburg, Meadows has conducted a live question and answer radio program for four years. He has 20 years experience in radio work. In all, he averages speaking 650 times each year.

One secret of brother Meadows success is the discipline he has for study. Rising early every morning, he usually begins studying at 5:30 and averages 5-6 hours every day.

James Meadows loves the Lord, His word, and His church. He has conducted workshops with several congregations on the subjects of church discipline and church growth. We have frequently heard him express his conviction that the most useful work for a preacher is in helping a local congregation develop its potential in a well-rounded program.

Any local congregation has a tremendous advantage in having a qualified and faithful preacher. Central in Spartanburg has enjoyed such an advantage. But James Meadows has been of great benefit not only to the people at Central, but also to the entire area, and to the brotherhood over the world.

## HOMEcoming

**Sunday, August 2, 1981**

(and each year first  
Sunday in August thereafter)

**WEST INNES STREET  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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**P.O. Box 1452, Salisbury, N.C. 28144  
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# God's Cure For Unhappiness

**Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC**

When we observe closely, it seems that most people, perhaps a large majority, are consigned to unhappy living — to an existence of misery, heartache, and disappointment rather than to a jubilant, dynamic, meaningful life. But unhappiness, although widespread, is not necessary. God has a cure for it, and that cure is revealed in His word. But before we can sincerely appreciate it, and let that appreciation be the motivation to appropriate it, we must know something about the problem, what it is, what causes it, and how it can be cured. Thus we start with a question:

## **What Is Unhappiness?**

Unhappiness is the opposite of happiness — what the one is the other is not. Happiness is a state of felicity in which life attains its highest summits — the state in which life is meaningful, useful, satisfying, and prosperous — prosperous because there is a minimum amount of mental stress and a maximum amount of gratifying achievement. Unhappiness then is a state lacking felicity because life has reached a wretched low — a state in which one feels life is meaningless, useless, unsatisfying, and a failure — a failure because there is a maximum amount of mental stress and a minimum amount of gratifying achievement.

Unhappiness, then, is a state of mind — a state of mind that can be maintained, modified, or changed.

## **Causes of Unhappiness**

Unhappiness is not caused by external things *per se*. It is caused ultimately by one's own complex makeup. But there are things that contribute to it — things that work adversely on one's personality. And while these things are too many and too varied to list, it should be obvious that some of them stand out enough to demand attention. We also understand that what produces unhappiness in one may not in another. But usually there are multiple causes, both psychological and physical.

We will discuss only a few.

1. Improper attitudes. A person's attitude or outlook determines how he reacts (or acts) to his environment as well as to other people and things. If one views things in the right way, they have a way of blessing his life; if he views them in the wrong way, the simplest matters can cause an astonishing amount of unhappiness. For example, I know a wife whose attitude leads her to misconstrue nearly every thing her husband says. He can pay her a high compliment but she will twist it into an insult and eventually become angry at him for his words. He can give her a gift and she constructs it into something devious and be- means him for it. This attitude has resulted in a vast amount of unhappiness for her and many heartaches for him. And the whole problem results from improper attitudes — she sees everything her husband does or says as an insult to her.

Improper attitudes account for much of the unhappiness in the world. Ananias and Sapphira had an improper attitude toward money and it cost them their lives (Acts 5:1-11). Elymas, the sorcerer, had a wrong attitude toward the word of truth and he was stricken blind for a season (Acts 13:8-10). The Jews took an improper attitude toward Christ and as a result their righteousness was not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:1-3).

Thus when one is unhappy, he needs to take a look at his own attitudes.

2. Sin. Sin is a violation of God's law (1 John 3:4; 5:17; James 4:17). It runs contrary to the very nature of man (who was made for righteousness). Sin in the life is as much out of place as a grain of sand in the eye or a tack in the shoe. It always causes friction, and friction results in unhappiness.

Some years ago I received a phone call from a lady who had heard me preach on the radio the previous Sunday. She said, "Your lesson was such an inspiration to me that I am convinced that you can give me just the help I need. Will you come over and talk with me?" Of course I would. I immediately dropped whatever I was doing



and headed in that direction. I went praying that this might be a soul I could help by leading her to Christ. When I arrived at the address she gave my eyes met with one of the most pathetic sights anyone can see. She was an alcoholic in the extreme stages. She had descended to the very bottom of human anguish. Her life was miserable (and the stench from the house was almost unbearable). After she had done much talking (mostly incoherent), walking, swearing, crying, praying, begging, and obscene abusive language, she wailed out, "O God! why do I have to suffer so? Why must I be so unhappy?" I could have truthfully replied, "You have ignored the laws of God and the very purpose of your being, and you are paying the consequences and receiving the rewards of your sin. God did not make man to be a drunkard. He made him to be sober — to be in full control of his mental powers. When one violates God's laws he must suffer for it."

Man was made for righteousness, not for sin. To ignore this fact and follow another course will inevitably lead to unhappiness. We understand this principle readily when it is applied to other things. Why not understand it in relation to life itself? When I was a boy, I worked many a hot day in a hay field with a pitchfork (that was before the good old days of modern machinery). It worked well because a pitchfork was made for the purpose of putting up hay. But I would be insane to try to type these lines with a pitchfork. While it works well in the purpose for which it was made, it was not made for typing. While I have been composing these pages a number of jet planes have flown overhead. They fly well because they were designed and built for that purpose. But suppose one tried to force a huge ship to fly. While it floats well in water, it will not fly. Just so, man was made to live by righteous standards, by the law of God. Paul had this principle in mind when he wrote to the Corinthians, saying, "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." (1 Cor. 6:13.) When one disregards the standard given by God, he puts his whole being in

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jeopardy and makes life as God intended it to be impossible. It is just as insane to try to build a useful and happy life on the principles of sin as it is to try to type with a pitchfork or to make a battleship fly.

Wherever unhappiness is found, the heart needs to be searched for sin.

3. Turmoil in the home. The home was designed by God to be a place of purity, peace, cooperation, oneness, all of which contribute to happiness, but too many homes, rather than being a haven of rest, have become a stench in the nostrils of its members. Thus the home is under fire from many enemies on many fronts. But perhaps the most effective attack is internal — the home is being torn apart from the inside. It has been estimated that less than one fourth of marriages can be described as happy. Nearly half are now ending in divorce, and certainly a large percentage of those not broken are, to say the least, troubled. Children also, by their disrespect for the home and rejection of parental authority, add fuel to the fires. But unfaithfulness to the marriage vows (caused largely by society's loose attitudes toward extramarital sex) is undoubtedly the largest contributor to unhappiness in the home. Husbands and wives no longer need each other to fill each other's physical, psychological, or emotional needs. Marriage has become an arrangement rather than a commitment. What used to be home is now no more than a pad. People live together instead of being tied together — they are two living as one rather than two becoming one. God specifically stated His way in the beginning, and the same was restated by Christ in the following words: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" (Matt. 19:5.)

Departure from the will of God in the home cannot help but produce misery and heartaches. Unhappiness is a necessary result of turmoil in the home. Happiness in a home filled with conflict is almost beyond human capacity. Thus to decrease unhappiness, we need to improve the home. The home is not just a good idea; it is the law — it is the will of God.

4. Dissatisfied in vocation. Man was

made to work — it is an integral part of his being. God said in the beginning, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” (Gen. 3:19.) Paul reinforces this, saying, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the things which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” (Eph. 4:28.) He had written earlier, “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” (2 Thess. 3:10.) Eating and working go hand in hand. And while work is a necessity, it should not be thought of as a curse, but rather as a blessing. There is more to work than the money earned. While one must consider salary in his choice of vocations, it should be low on his priority list. There is more important things to consider about work than money.

It seems that each one is born with an inclination to some particular kind of work. My son, Tim, loves to tinker with any kind of mechanical instrument (he says he is going to be a mechanic) but I dislike all such with a passion. I love books and writing, but he dislikes both. Now it is obvious that I could not be happy as a mechanic and probably Tim could not be happy as a writer and preacher (and that is extremely hard for me to accept because, more than anything else about his work, I want him to be a preacher). Work can thus be either pleasant or it can contribute to unhappiness, depending on whether it fills one's psychological needs as well as his physical.

When a person is confined to a vocation he has no interest in or love for, when he cannot find satisfaction and fulfillment in his work, he has present in his life a strong contributing factor for unhappiness. If one is not happy with his work, if it does not bring him some degree of satisfaction, he probably ought to search for a new job, one his heart is inclined toward.

### **The Cure for Unhappiness**

There are many other contributing factors to unhappiness, but we must now turn our attention to the cure. God's cure for unhappiness is simply **happiness**. God made man to be happy, to achieve, and to find contentment in his achievement. But, as we

observed above, happiness has its price tag and only those who are willing to pay the price can attain it.

### **Happiness Is . . .**

Some years ago on a Sunday morning I asked the whole assembly at Duncan, South Carolina, to complete in writing the following sentence, “Happiness is . . .” The response was both gratifying and edifying, and I think it will help us determine what happiness is and how it may be attained. Divided into two parts, the ones submitted by young people (some only seven years old), and the ones by adults, here are the results:

#### **Youth**

“Happiness is fulfillment.”

“Happiness is being a Christian, doing His will, and loving Him always.”

“Happiness is doing things together.”

“Happiness is knowing God's love.”

“Happiness is being a child of God and doing His will.”

“Happiness is love.”

“Happiness is obeying God.”

“Happiness is having faith in and love for God.”

“Happiness is showing your love and feelings for people (especially the sick) and having people love you. Happiness is having a good home and family to love. Happiness is seeing sick people in the hospital smile and say, ‘Thank you,’ when you do something nice for them.”

“Happiness is loving people and having love in my family.”

“Happiness is Jesus Christ.”

“Happiness is having a goal and working toward it while being a faithful Christian and associating with other Christians.”

“Happiness is making others happy.”

“Happiness is that state of mind which results from doing that which one knows is right, especially if he goes out of his way to do it.”

#### **Adults**

“Happiness is living in the Lord.”

“Happiness is love, kindness, joy, peace.”

“Happiness is being able to attend

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church where you learn the truth of the Bible.”

“Happiness is peace of mind with both God and man, and knowing that we are doing God’s will in all things.”

“Happiness is being with other Christians.”

“Happiness is being in Christ and living for the Lord.”

“Happiness is a Christian family who lives for the Lord — those who do this should have **everything**, including especially love and understanding.”

“Happiness is being in Christ.”

“Happiness is being loved by those we care most about.”

“Happiness is contentment with truth and love in the home and in the soul.”

“Happiness is complete surrender to Jesus Christ and **all** He teaches.”

“Happiness is living right.”

“Happiness is being able to worship God and live in a free country.”

“Happiness is looking forward to the happiness hereafter which is possible because of the great love Christ had for us.”

“Happiness is serving God instead of self.”

“Happiness is contentment.”

“Happiness is being a faithful Christian and doing God’s will at all times.”

“Happiness is something everyone seeks and very few find. Many confuse pleasure with happiness. It is true that we may find happiness in pleasure for a short time, but it is not lasting. We can seek happiness by reading the Bible, but even this does not satisfy the soul. It is only when we apply God’s word to us and have faith in what it says that we can find true happiness. God knows man better than man knows himself. True happiness and contentment and peace of mind can come only by obeying God’s will.”

Nearly all of these statements are pregnant with thought, discernment, and wisdom. For example: “Happiness is fulfillment” (from a thirteen-year-old girl). And then from an eight-year-old boy, “Happiness is making others happy.” Years of thought and philosophical training would find it difficult to improve on these July 1981

two observations. From a teenage boy who had obeyed the gospel only a few weeks before making this statement: “Happiness is Jesus Christ.” Then from a young man who had been reared in a denominational church, having learned the truth and obeyed the gospel about 15 months earlier, “Happiness is being able to attend church where you learn the truth of the Bible.”

Happiness is attainable, but one does not find it by seeking for it directly. Happiness is doing — doing the will of God. It is a by-product, the results of doing right, regardless of the cost, discouragement, or discomfort.

We must be careful not to get sidetracked here: one does not do right just to be happy. That would make happiness the end within itself. Right (duty) would be defeated. One must do right for right’s sake and not because it brings happiness or some other reward. Thus to be happy one must forget happiness and do his duty.

After he had sought happiness in riches, in pleasure, in wisdom, in honor, and in many other things the physical man longs for, Solomon said, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” (Eccl. 12:13.) Here, then, is the cure for unhappiness: fear God and keep his commandments. This is the whole duty of man. Interestingly enough, there is no word in the original Hebrew for “duty.” The translators added it to aid our understanding of the passage. But we would probably be closer to Solomon’s thought by leaving it out altogether. It is the **whole** of man, the whole purpose of man, to keep God’s commandments, to do God’s will. There is no other reason for his being. This is the purpose for which he was made. When one does God’s will (fills his purpose for being) his life is meaningful, useful, satisfying, and prosperous — prosperous because there is a minimum amount of mental stress and a maximum amount of gratifying achievement. That is happiness, and happiness is God’s cure for unhappiness.

The price we must pay for happiness is obedience to the will of God — complete submission to all He has commanded us to

do. It is not an end within itself. When one does right (keeps God's commandments) happiness results as a by-product. It is the

results of doing one's duty. Hence, happiness is doing right!

## The Fear Of Death

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

Dr. Gerald Feinberg of Columbia University is doing research on aging, hoping to extend man's lifespan. This is an interesting and exciting project and of course all wish him early success.

Dr. Feinberg says, "Control over aging would alleviate the fear of death. I would guess that the elimination of this constant fear on everyone's mental horizon would act as a tremendous liberating force on the human mind. It would result in people much better balanced psychologically than

we are at present."

To the above I add these thoughts.

1. Man may extend his earth life but he will not escape death. "It is appointed unto men once to die." (Heb. 9:27.) "Through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men. . . ." (Romans 5:12.) The Creator of man decreed the wages of sin to be death (Romans 6:23). No man can avoid this.

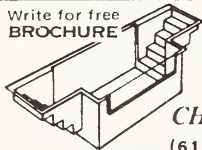
2. Man can be released from the fear of death whether Dr. Feinberg succeeds or not. Jesus took upon himself a human body, "that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage." (Heb. 2:14-15.) Thus Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." (John 11:25.)

3. Why do men fear death? It is not the certainty of it. Nor is it just the uncertainty of when it will be. Fear of pain or the separation from earth ties does not explain it. Rather, it is the fear of judgment; the fear of punishment for wrongs done in this life. This is described as "a certain fearful expectation of judgement and the fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversary." (Heb. 10:27.)

4. The Christian outgrows his fear of death, but not because of health, prosperity or longevity. He overcomes this fear because Christ gives him forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16); a clear conscience (Heb. 10:22); promise of a resurrection from death (1 Thess. 4:16-18); and a sure hope of heavenly reward when life is over (John 14:1-3).

We wish the greatest success to the project of Dr. Feinberg. But to those who want a swifter, surer solution to the problem, I recommend Jesus of Nazareth, the Great Physician.

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# Enemies Of The Cross Of Christ

Christianity is for Christ, standing on His side; the world is anti-Christ. We must choose between them. There is no middle ground. To be for the one is to be against the other. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. 12:30.) Paul draws this line sharply in a challenging passage. He says, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." (Phil. 3:18, 19.)

In this passage the cross is the symbol of the whole Christian system, a system which draws all its power and being from the Christ who died on the cross. Thus to be an enemy of the cross is to be an enemy of all Christ was, is, or ever shall be; it is to be an enemy of all that He did for man and this world; it is to be an enemy of His birth, life, death, resurrection, present reign, and every aspect of His system to save the lost; it is to be an enemy of the only real hope and happiness known to men in this world and an enemy of heaven, the only divine aspiration in the world to come. But who are the enemies of the cross of Christ? The answer is obvious: anyone who despises or rejects what the cross stands for. Paul gives four classes of such enemies in the two verses before us:

**1. Whose end is destruction.** This includes all who live in hopelessness — all those outside of Christ, outside the covenant. They are "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.) They are not traveling the high road to eternal blessings but the

low road to hell and destruction. As John Oxenham wrote:

*"To every man there openeth  
A Way, and Ways, and a Way.  
And the High Soul climbs the High Way,  
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,  
And in between, on the misty flats,  
The rest drift to and fro.  
But to every man there openeth  
A High Way, and a Low.  
And every man decideth  
The Way his soul shall go."*

Their end is destruction because they fail to live right in the sight of God. They are thus enemies of the cross of Christ.

**2. Whose god is their belly.** These live only to fill their stomach or to satisfy physical appetites. In another passage Paul spoke of them: "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good works and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. 16:28.) Their philosophy is to eat, drink, and be merry; to live it up; to squeeze every drop of pleasure out of time; to forget about the soul and live for the body. Food, drink, and the pleasantries of life (such as better houses, finer cars, bigger television sets, more fun and recreation, etc.), is the whole of life for them. The god "belly" is worshipped with the sacrifice of much food and drink. When he is satisfied, there is nothing left for the higher values of life. The cross of Christ is trampled under foot because it does not serve "belly."

**3. Whose glory is their shame.** That is, they glory in their shameful practices. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such

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*The fellow who says he'll meet you  
half way is sometimes a poor judge of  
distance.*

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turn away.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

Perhaps the most obvious practices in this class center around illegitimate sexual activities, such as homosexuality, orgies, nudity, mate swapping, fornication, etc. Such shameful things are both promoted and glorified daily on television, movies, and in books. This includes all pornographic literature — a shameful production. And the minds which produce it, as well as those who feed upon its sordid concepts, are enemies of the cross of Christ. It is opposed to all the cross stands for. This fact needs to be driven straight into our hearts, especially into the hearts of youth.

**4. Who mind earthly things.** These are the materialists — they who know nothing of the spiritual. They do the exact opposite of what Paul instructed Christians to do: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the

earth.” (Col. 3:1, 2.)

The theory of evolution, believed widely and taught almost universally by the secular schools, reduces man to nothing more than a freak of nature, an accidental arrangement of matter developed from lower forms of life, which was in turn accidentally developed from non-living matter. With this view of himself, man has no choice but to conclude that there is nothing about man but the earthly. There is nothing else for him to mind. Paul, however, leaves no room for doubt but that such a view is an enemy of the cross of Christ — an enemy because it denies everything pertaining to the cross. The cross is useless if man is nothing more than an accidental arrangement of matter.

If we do not wish to be enemies of the cross of Christ then we must do the exact opposite of the things which Paul mentions, namely, we must have our end eternal life, we must serve God (or live spiritually), we must glory only in that which is right, true, and holy, and we must mind heavenly things.

## An Important Note:

**To: Carolina Christian**

**From: Boone Church of Christ,  
P.O. Box 1265, Boone, N.C.**

On June 7, 1981, during the morning worship, a lesson was preached by a member of the church while the minister was away. The lesson did not agree with the word of God. Therefore, this lesson cannot and will not be endorsed by this congregation, its minister, or its leadership. This notice is to serve as record and reference concerning this sermon. Anyone who was visiting with us, please know that this situation has been taken care of and we would welcome any correspondence concerning this matter. Either write or call 704 — 264-9693. Please know of our intent to have this solved completely and quickly.

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The Men of the Boone Church of Christ

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# Expo 82 — Evangelism Opportunities

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN.**

A World's Fair will be held in Knoxville, Tn., May-October of 1982. Being in the heartland of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Nuclear Energy Plants, it has been tabbed the Energy Exposition. Some 11 million visitors from around the world are anticipated.

This program provides a great challenge and opportunity to the Lord's people to present the gospel to those who come. Many will recall the highly successful outreach conducted by our brethren at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair. Congregations in East Tennessee are committed to have a similar exhibit at Expo 82. The elders of the Laurel congregation in Knoxville have already agreed to oversee the project. Churches in the immediate area have pledged themselves to raise \$75,000 to pay for the floor space. A contract has been negotiated securing for us a choice location in the Hall of Industries and States, the principal building on the fair grounds. Most of the 11 million guests will have to walk past our display.

Obviously such an undertaking is greater than any one congregation or even the 50 congregations in and around Knoxville.

The challenge is to the entire brotherhood and the benefits will flow outward to all. The projected costs will be no less than \$600,000. While this would overwhelm one congregation, it can easily be met by the 11,500 congregations of our brotherhood. Already some \$140,000 has been pledged.

The Laurel elders are well along in the planning and organization of the exhibit. They are leaning heavily upon the expertise and advice of those who were leaders in the New York project.

The purpose of the exhibit will be to make known to the masses the Church of Christ and to create a favorable awareness of who we are, what we believe, and what we are doing. Gospel teaching will be the centerpiece of the project. Skilled teachers will be on hand continually to instruct those willing to learn. Use will be made of modern electronic teaching devices. A mini-viewing room for gospel films is contemplated. Massive use of tracts and literature will be employed. This is a major evangelistic outreach with world-wide dimensions. At least 2500 baptisms resulted directly from the New York World's Fair. Juan Monroy of Spain was first contacted there. This has born remarkable fruit for the church in Spain.

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4. Plan to visit the Expo and see the exhibit for yourself and share the joy first-

hand.

The Karns congregation is enthusiastically supporting this work. I am pleased to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Laurel elders in this project. I urge the support and cooperation of all brethren — may God have the glory.

Contributions should be sent to Laurel Church of Christ, World's Fair Exhibit, P.O. Box 10683, Knoxville, Tn. 37919.



## The Work Of The Holy Spirit (Part 1)

**Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC**

In previous studies we have seen some things the Holy Spirit was not given to do and have had a rather lengthy discussion of the Spirit's indwelling. I now wish to turn our attention to the work of the Holy Spirit — the work that He ascribes to Himself in the inspired Scriptures. His work can be summed up in four propositions: (1) to reveal the truth; (2) to confirm the truth revealed; (3) to deliver the truth confirmed; and (4) to impregnate the truth delivered. It is my aim to devote an entire article to each of these.

### TRUTH REVEALED

To reveal the truth was and is the Holy Spirit's basic and fundamental work. Man, in his lost condition, needed salvation. But before he could be saved he would have to know and do the will of God. But the will of God, until it was revealed, was concealed in the mind of God. And without revelation, man had no access to it. Somewhere the contents of the divine mind had to be made known to the mind of man if man was to be saved. But how could this be accomplished? It was done through revelation.

God could have made His will known, I suppose, through innumerable means, but He chose revelation. He could have spoken to man face to face, as He did to Moses (Ex. 33:11; Deut. 5:4). He could have revealed His will to the head of the family, as He did in the patriarchal age. He might have chosen the leader of a community or nation and spoken through him. But He has

chosen another method. He sent the Holy Spirit to reveal His will through chosen men. And regardless of how many ways God might have revealed His will, He did so through the Spirit. Thus the revelation of truth is the fundamental work of the Holy Spirit. Everything He does is related to this. And to miss this point is to utterly misunderstand both the Holy Spirit and His work.

Without revelation man is unable to know (that is, know His will), honor, or serve God. This makes the work of the Holy Spirit absolutely indispensable.

God has always disclosed Himself and His will to man by some form of revelation. But during the Old Testament period the revelation was always incomplete (that is, there was always an undercurrent that looked forward to that which was yet to be revealed). There is a line running straight through the Old Testament from Adam to Christ, and every aspect of that line says, in essence, completeness will be in Him who is to come. Thus the Old Testament points to the complete, the perfect, the final revelation of God's will. It points to that which is the end or the purpose of everything written in the old covenant — a time when revelation would be completed, a time when no more would be either needed or given.

This is why Christ is said to be the end of the law. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4.) "The end of the law" here does not have reference to the fact that the law would come to an end (even though it did in the death of Christ, Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 1:13-17) but rather to



the fact that Christ was the end toward which it pointed, the end in view, the purpose for which it was given. When Christ came, the law had served its purpose (Gal. 3:23-25).

While the Old Testament always made room for additional revelation, the New Testament claims to be final — it is that absolutely perfect system promised throughout the Old Testament (cf. Jer. 31:31ff; Heb. 8:6-13; 1 Cor. 2:1-14; Jude 3). It is the consummation of all revelation. Nothing was ever to be added to it, subtracted from it, or substituted for it (Rev. 22:18, 19; Gal. 1:12). It was final.

But not only was it final, it was also complete. It revealed all that man needs to know in order to be saved, to live the Christian life, and to enter heaven when this life is over. It was God's complete system — God's complete revelation. Notice carefully what Paul said about the gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:16, 17.) The righteousness of God here is not an attribute of God but rather the righteousness revealed by God for His people. But if the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel, nothing unrevealed can be the righteousness of God. Righteousness is revealed. Paul adds, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) All faith, in both theory and practice, must be based upon what God reveals. This simply means that man cannot practice unrevealed things by faith. Man must, therefore, have revelation to please God.

It is the function of the Holy Spirit to reveal the things of God, the things that man must know in order to please God. Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore

said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:13-15.) This promise was made to the apostles only, not to all Christians, for it was through them the revelation would be given. The truth would be made known to all, indirectly, but the Spirit was to reveal it to and through the apostles in a direct and miraculous way. Paul adds, "But God hath revealed them unto us [inspired men] by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God [and he to whom the Spirit reveals them]." (1 Cor. 2:10-12.) Peter, in his remarks on how revelation was received and delivered by holy men of old, said, "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21.) All these verses, and many more in all parts of the Bible, clearly affirm that the work of the Holy Spirit was to reveal truth — to take the mind of God and make it known to the human mind.

But revelation necessitates a method. What method, therefore, did the Spirit use in revealing God's will to man? Did He reveal the truth directly to each individual? Or did He reveal God's plan and thus impose upon each individual to study that plan? The answer is obvious to all those who accept the Scriptures as the revelation of God's will to man. The Spirit gave the revelation; now man must study the Scriptures to learn it. It was never the Spirit's function to reveal to each individual directly the will of God.

Man does not think as God thinks. And for this reason he can never know God's will until it is revealed unto him. Isaiah, speaking for God, said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9.) But if man is to know God's will he must know His thoughts — man must know the thoughts (will) of God to be pleasing to Him. God, in order to reveal His thoughts

to man, sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in turn took the contents of the divine mind and put them into words, and through the words chosen, words now contained in the Scriptures, conveyed the will of God to the mind of man. That is the method of revelation taught by the Spirit Himself in the Bible. And as far as the Scriptures are concerned, the Spirit uses no other method to reveal the things of God to man. He clothed the will of God in human words, words understandable to man, in order to reveal God's will. The thoughts of God are conveyed through words to the mind of man. The words, the vehicles which carry the thoughts of God, words chosen by the Holy Spirit, now make up the Scriptures.

We cannot but conclude, then, that the Spirit does not work directly on the mind of man today. (He may have done so on some occasions to those originally used as instruments through which He expressed the will of God, the men He inspired to write the New Testament, but He does not do so today: because such an act would constitute a miracle, and the Spirit no longer works through man miraculously — He does so only through means.) He reveals the truth,

His basic and fundamental work, through the living word of God. He originally revealed the truth through chosen men; He reveals it today through the words delivered by the chosen men. The chosen men, using the words supplied to them by the Spirit, wrote under His immediate direction. What they wrote was the word of God. When their work was completed, the end-product was an inspired Book.

Thus the work of the Holy Spirit was to reveal the truth; He revealed the truth in chosen words; the words which He revealed now constitute the Scriptures. It is therefore a grave misconception of the Holy Spirit and His work to seek or expect God's will to be revealed now apart from the written word. And it is a serious error to ascribe works to the Spirit that are not related to His primary function of revealing the truth. The work of the Holy Spirit was to reveal the will of God to man, and all that He does is related to this primary function.

In my next, I will show how the words spoken by chosen men were confirmed — how the Holy Spirit guarantees that they are the words of God.

# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Mooreville.** Jim Smith will be moving his family back to West Virginia sometime in July. They have done a good work in Mooreville.

**Salisbury.** John Crosslin is writing a weekly article for the local newspaper. Their bulletin indicates that West Innes is a busy congregation.

**Raleigh.** The Herald of Truth is now a Channel 28, WPTF-TV. There were 500 people who registered at the recent Mar-

riage Enrichment Seminar.

**Asheville.** William A. Cannon has moved to the Biltmore church to work as the regular preacher.

## N.C. Baptisms

Taylorsville, 6; Raleigh, 7; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 2; Northview, Statesville, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 2; Helen Street, Fayetteville, 2; Providence Road, Charlotte, 2; Brewer Road, Winston-Salem, 1. Total: 23.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Columbia.** The West Columbia bulletin carried a special "Thank you" note for the

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### South Carolina

Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, Don McWhorter . . . . . August 6-9  
Central, Spartanburg, Avon Malone . . . . . August 9-14

St. Andrews Road congregation for the gift of a bus. It is encouraging to see these two congregations working together.

**Chester.** Duke Gregory has moved from Chester to a new work in Tennessee.

**Greenville.** The Northeast congregation still has an attractive offer of bonds. Individuals looking for a sound and helpful investment should investigate this.

**Greer.** A note in the bulletin lists Milton S. Parker's new address as P.O. Box 362,

Trenton, Ga. 30752. Brother Parker is a faithful servant of the Master.

**Greer.** The dates for the 1981 S.C. Lectures are November 9-11. The theme will be "Going and Growing for Jesus."

### **S.C. Baptisms**

West Columbia, 2; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Myrtle Beach, 4; Union, 1; Essex Village, Charleston, 2; Greer, 2; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 3. Total: 15.

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## Editorial Book Views

**DeHoff's Commentary, Vol. V**, George W. DeHoff; DeHoff Publications, Murfreesboro, TN 37130; 451 large pages, cloth \$17.95.

The long-awaited fifth volume, covering Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts, of DeHoff's Commentary is now off the press and ready for delivery. Its makeup (as were the four previous volumes) is of superior craftsmanship, and it will grace and beautify any library. But more important is its contents. While brief, and aimed at helping the common people (scholars will find little of the theological wrangling here that it seems to take to satisfy their taste), it has many marvelous, useful, and pointed observations. No one can misunderstand or question where the author stands on the inspiration of the Scriptures, the meaning and function of miracles (including the virgin birth), the scheme of human redemption, and man's obligation to his creator. Nor can one fail to see the author's profound love for and faith in the divine Savior. We have reviewed with high praise the previous volumes in this set. This one merits the same praise, except more so. In our judgment it has reached a new height of excellence. We believe any lover of truth will profit by its frequent use. And those who have the four previous volumes will most assuredly wish to add this one to the set.

**John Wesley**, Stanley Ayling; Abingdon, Nashville, TN; 350 pages, cloth \$10.95.

A well written and abundantly documented biography of one of the most colorful religious leaders of the 18th century, one who is second only to Luther and Calvin in

his contribution to the Protestant Reformation. It serves not only as a biography but also a history of the beginning of Methodism. As the back cover states, he was a "friend of the common people, eloquent spokesman, champion of social reforms, and author of over four-hundred published works. Devoted to the Church of England, yet leading his own group of believers, Wesley founded the Methodist movement — an influence that was spread by his followers throughout the world." There is much here to enlighten (such as the fact that early Methodist societies took the Lord's supper weekly), to surprise (such as a parallel between the strict rules imposed by Wesley on his societies and the rules insisted upon by many in the campus work growing out of Gainesville, Fla.), and to amuse (such as his sharp rebuke of young Adam Clarke for grieving over the death of an infant daughter). Makes interesting and profitable reading.

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1981

NORTH CAROLINA EVANGELISM SEMINAR  
Labor Day Weekend  
SEPTEMBER 4-6

# “HERE AM I, SEND ME”

The Harvest is Plentiful, but the Laborers are few . . . who will be sent into the harvest field? We are told by Jesus to pray for laborers, but in that prayer, we are essentially praying for ourselves. Will we be the one to stand up and say, “Here am I, Send Me?” This is the theme of the 1981 North Carolina Evangelism Seminar; we pray that you’ll join us.

## *Guest Speakers Include:*

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G.P. Holt — Indianapolis, Indiana  
David Wheeler — Charlotte, N.C.

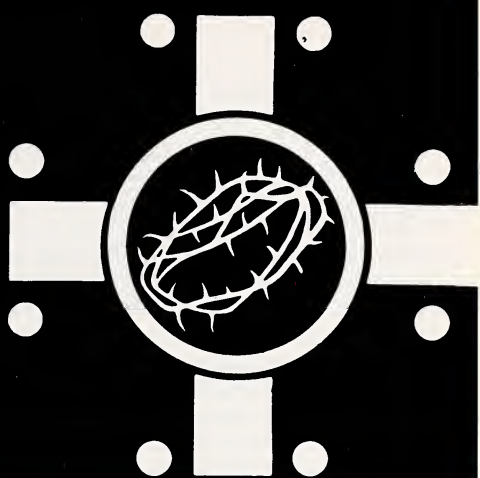
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 8, AUGUST 1981



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C292



**Ola Robinette (See Page 8)**

Photo by Dan Stikeleather

# EDITORIAL

## WHAT IS MAN?

What is man? This is one of the most intriguing questions ever raised . . . and one of the most serious. But it is a question which cannot be fully answered by the unaided reason and research of man alone (cf. Jer. 10:23). The final answer must come from the Maker Himself. He made man and He alone knows fully what man is. We must, therefore, go to the Scriptures and seek God's reply, God's revelation, about the origin and makeup of man.

The Bible says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) This verse reveals three fundamental facts about man: (1) God formed him from the dust of the ground; (2) God breathed into him the breath of life; (3) man became a living soul.

First, then, man is a creation of God — he is here by a special act of the divine Creator. God personally formed him from the dust of the ground. This means that man is not the product of chance, the offspring of lower forms of life, the results of a long evolutionary process, the outgrowth of no power above and beyond himself and nature. Evolution is a science falsely so-called, denying both the power and handiwork of the Creator and the dignity of man. But God leaves no doubt as to man's origin. He said, "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." (Isa. 43:7.) There are three expressions here, each adding a shade of thought to the other. God created man — brought him into being; He formed him or gave him his present shape; and He made him what he is. Man is therefore a created being.

Second, God breathed into man the breath of life. Whatever else this may mean, it certainly reveals to us that life is from God. It is divine. And throughout the remainder of the Bible human life is looked upon as sacred (e.g., Gen. 9:6; Ex. 20:13). Man is therefore more than the dust of the

ground — more even than the beast of the field or any other created thing. His life is from God and it demands special protection.

Third, man is a living soul, an eternal spirit. He is a material body in which God breathed the breath of life. But that is not the whole of man; he is more than a body. He is a soul (spirit) living in a body. The body is one thing; the spirit is another. Paul said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:23.) Solomon, the wise man, wrote, "Then shall the dust [body] return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7.)

But consider this: if man is no more than an accidental product of evolution, he is not a soul, not a spirit, and is not a responsible being. He is therefore not guilty of sin (sin is only a delusion) and thus does not need a revelation from God to guide him or a Savior to save him. The standards of morality are only options developed by society. There is, in reality, no right and wrong — such concepts are only develop-

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ments of the animal mind. Man is no better (and no worse) than the beast of the field, the fowl of the air, or the fish of the sea.

What is man? He is a creation of God, who received his life from God, and is an eternal soul accountable to God. When man is viewed in this light, his origin, existence, and future become meaningful — meaningful because he came from God, is here to serve God, and has the promise of being with God throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. But viewed in any other way, his origin is obscured in mystery, his existence is meaningless and useless, and his future is dark and gloomy, unknown and unknowable.

## THE WORTH OF MAN

The physical part of man, when one considers only his organic value, is not worth much. But man is more than the physical. He is a spiritual as well as a physical being. And because of his spiritual nature, man is the most valuable of all created things. While the Bible most certainly teaches us to be humble, humility does not require one to deny his worth; in fact, it must lead him to affirm it.

In my short lifetime I have heard a number of people say, "I am not worth killing" or "I am not worth the bullet it would take to shoot me." A television commercial has a beautiful young woman saying that the product she represents cost more, but, she concludes, "I'm worth it!" Here we have expressed two philosophies about man's worth. Which is correct? Does man have worth or is he worthless? The Scriptures answer clearly and concisely:

Man is a creature of great value — he is made in the image of his Maker! The Bible says, in revealing the origin of man, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. . . . And God saw everything that he had made, and

behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:26-28, 31.)

Man's position in creation indicates his great worth. He is made only a little lower than the host of heaven. David wrote beautifully in Psalm 8: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou has ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou has put all things under his feet." (Ps. 8:3-6.)

Man's worth is also seen in the fact that God loves him — the Creator loves His creature! The degree of God's love for man is incomprehensible. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

But the ultimate standard by which the value of man can be measured is the death of Christ. He gave up the riches of heaven (2 Cor. 8:9), came to this sinful world in the form of a man (Phil. 2:5-11), and died the cruel shameful death on the cross for man's redemption (1 John 2:2; Eph. 1:7). "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:6-8.)

The value of man is thus established by the facts that he is made in the image of God, created a little lower than the angels, loved by God, and redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MAN?

Man was created by God and placed in the beautiful garden of Eden to live a happy carefree life. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Eccl.

7:29.) But man is no longer in that garden, he is no longer upright, and his life (outside of Christ) is anything but happy and care-free. What happened to him?

When God placed him in his garden home He said to man, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:16, 17.) Note in particular two facts revealed in these verses: (1) man had access to everything in the garden but was forbidden to eat of the fruit of a certain tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; (2) to eat of the forbidden fruit would be to transgress God's law and the penalty would be death. Man was thus made a creature of volition — a being who could choose between right and wrong. His choice would determine his relationship with God.

But man was not alone in God's created universe. The devil soon appeared on the scene to disturb man's tranquility. "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field. . . . And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The woman replied that they could eat of all the trees except the one. The devil then changed God's truth to a lie by saying, "Ye shall not surely die." Eve was thus deceived and believed him. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Gen. 3:1-6.) Because of this violation, God pronounced a curse upon the woman, upon the serpent, and upon man (Gen. 3:9-19). They were driven from the garden. "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." (Gen. 3:23.)

Satan, through the serpent, led man to disregard the word of God — the woman believed the devil's lie instead of God's truth. They therefore fell from their high and holy estate into the degradation of sin and shame. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that

all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12.) This simply means that all the sorrow, all the suffering, and all the woes have come upon man because of sin.

But what is sin? In the final analysis it is the dethroning of God by the improper use of created things. By virtue of creation all things belong to God (cf. Ps. 24:1; 50:10-12; Hag. 2:8; 1 Cor. 10:28). Even man's soul belongs to Him (Ez. 18:4). "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31.) Thus everything is right when put to its intended use. Sin is therefore the wrong use of created things.

God made everything, and He has the divine right to determine how they are to be used. He made all the trees of the garden for a purpose, even the forbidden tree. Eve sinned when she violated the will of God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil contrary to the plan, purpose, and word of God. This is the very nature of sin — the misuse of God's created things.

What happened to man? He sinned and by that sin was separated from God (Isa. 59:1, 2).

## WHAT HAS SIN DONE TO MAN?

Sin has brought man to the brink of eternal ruin. It has robbed him of the paradise in which God placed him at the time of his creation. It has made him a fallen and degraded creature, only a shadow of what he could have been. Man was not made for sin. He was created upright (Eccl. 7:29), made for righteousness. But he sinned . . . and he has kept on sinning, even after the means of salvation have been so graciously provided by a loving God. What does sin do to man?

1. Because of sin, the earth has become hostile to man. When he was first placed in his garden home, he had a perfect environment, as far as material things were concerned (Gen. 1:31). But he transgressed God's law, disobeyed God's word, and as a consequence the whole earth was changed (Gen. 3:13-21). That which was made for his pleasure now became hostile to him. God said to man, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field."

(Gen. 3:17b, 18.)

2. Sin has separated man from God. Originally God walked and talked with man (Gen. 3:8-12). They obviously had sweet and intimate fellowship. But all this was changed when man sinned. Sin broke the relationship, and God drove him from the garden (Gen. 3:22-24). Isaiah describes this lost state of man by saying, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isa. 59:1, 2.) Sin now stands between man and God, and only the blood of Christ can bridge the gap.

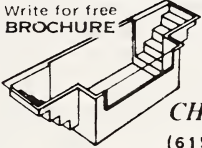
3. Sin has brought man under the penalty of death. God said to the original pair when he placed them in the garden, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:16, 17.) They disregarded God's warnings and ate of the forbidden fruit. They thus sinned and death passed upon them (Rom. 5:12). This was more than physical death (although physical death may well be a consequence); it is spiritual death — a separation from God. It is what we call the lost state. In the fall man passed from his state of close relationship with God to a state of separation from God.

But what is true of Adam is true of all men: for all have sinned (Rom. 3:9, 23; 5:12; 11:32). And the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). When man sins he must pay the price — the demands of God's word (that sin brings death) must be met. Thus death, spiritual death, separation from God, must now be paid for sin. This is why men are lost. They have sinned, and the penalty of sin, all sin, sin in all men, is eternal death.

4. Because of sin, man now faces eternal damnation (Mark 16:16). He has violated the will of God. The penalty of that violation is death. He has absolutely no means of paying the penalty and thereby escaping death on his own. Without divine intervention, which comes only in the person and work of Jesus Christ, man is hopelessly lost.

Sin is therefore at the root of all man's ills. It has made the earth hostile to him, separated  
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him from God, placed him under the penalty of death, and brought him face to face with eternal damnation. His only hope is for a Savior to divinely intervene for him — that his sin debt be paid by another.



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# The Call To Discipleship

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.**

Three separate incidents in the early days of Jesus' ministry hold for us the key to Christian commitment. In Matthew 4:18-22 we read of the calling of Peter, Andrew, James and John, "And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea. . . . And he saith unto them, Come ye after me. . . . And they straightway left the nets, and followed him. And going on from thence he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother . . . and he called them. And they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him." Concerning the calling of Matthew, Luke writes, "And after these things he went forth, and beheld a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me. And he forsook all, and rose up and followed him." (Luke 5:27-28.) In John 1:43 the call is issued to Philip, ". . . And he findeth Philip: and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me." There is one significant phrase peculiar to all three incidents, "Follow me." This is the call to discipleship, the call to attach oneself to Jesus as a follower and learner. It is a call that beckons to all men and is one that no man can afford to ignore.

"Disciple" as used in the Gospels is not merely a noun but is the term used to note the relationship that exists between Christ and His followers. Thus, the call to discipleship is a call for one to attach himself to Christ Jesus in an exclusive relationship in which Jesus becomes the focal point of the

disciple's life. It is a call to a relationship which brings radical changes to the believer's life. The call to discipleship is a call to bondage, to slavery, to the Master and Lord.

The call to follow after Christ is a call to obedience. When Jesus beckoned to those first disciples the response was unquestioning obedience. When He beckons to us today the response must be the same. It cannot be obedience such as that as the rich young man of Matthew 19:16-22. After asking what he must do in order to have eternal life he was told to be obedient to the commandments of the law. This he had done but still felt that something was lacking. Jesus then subjected the young man to a real test of discipleship, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." His response to that call and its demand? "But when the young man heard the saying, he went away sorrowful. . . ." The obedience of the young man was centered in himself. He was obedient while it was convenient, but sorrowed and disobeyed when faced with the issue of costly obedience. His was self-willed obedience, but discipleship calls for self-denying obedience. For one to genuinely follow Christ Jesus he must be willing to surrender his own will to the will of the Master, for he is called to obedient service to the Lord.

Discipleship to Christ is a way of life that carries with it great privileges and blessings, but also costly responsibilities and consequences. Genuine discipleship must be earnestly sought and vigorously pursued. We are called to a way of life that makes specific demands of the believer. Many either reject that call outright or seek discipleship on their own terms. However, we are called to discipleship on Christ's terms or no terms at all. We are challenged to trust in Christ alone as we submit to His demands in following Him. And He has the right to make such demands. Having paid the price He can require us to count the cost. To this we are called.

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# Guilty

**Charlie Harrison, Williamston, S.C.**

“Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” (Acts 5:28.) The apostles had been brought before the council and the high priest reminded them of the charge which had already been given them that they “should not teach in this name.” Then the high priest said that they had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine and that they intended to bring the blood of Jesus upon them, the council as well as all Jews.

This indeed was what the apostles intended to do. By the commission of Christ they proclaimed the gospel (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15, 16). They did this, making all the Jews of Jerusalem aware of the fact that they were guilty of the blood of Christ. Later, the apostles and others went forth from Jerusalem and preached in, “Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8.)

Peter said, in his first gospel sermon, that, “Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain,” Jesus, who had been approved of God (Acts 2:22, 23.) Near the climax of that sermon Peter further spoke of that guilt, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:36.)

Many of the Jewish leaders refused to believe the evidence concerning Christ from the prophets. They not only refused to believe on Christ but they also imprisoned the apostles and had them beaten.

The only one who was benevolent toward the apostles was Gamaliel, who said, “Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this council or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” (Acts 5:38, 39.) A philosopher among political leaders, for this is what the council had become, was not to be desired. Therefore we hear no more of Gamaliel and his ad-

vice. The apostles are again beaten and charged not to teach in the name of Jesus again lest they suffer further punishment.

On Solomon’s porch Peter pointed out that Pilate was willing to release Christ. “But ye denied the Holy one and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.” (Acts 3:14, 15.) By the evidence presented ignorance was no excuse for the Jews. They were called upon to, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.” (Acts 3:19.)

Thus far we have seen clearly the guilt of the Jews in the death of Christ. Does this relieve us of the blood of Christ, or are we also guilty?

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” (Isa. 53:5, 6.) Christ took upon himself the sins which were ours and went to the cross for us. Our sin caused the crucifixion of Christ. Thus, we too are guilty of the blood of Christ, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. 3:23.)

As Paul sets forth the gospel for us he states simply, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.” (1 Cor. 15:3.) Again we see that Christ died because of our sins. So we too are guilty.

No one need remain under the condemnation of sin. To the Jews first was given the answer to life’s most perplexing question. “Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” (Acts 2:37, 38.) Even though they were guilty of the blood of Christ they could be relieved of that guilt and have all their past sins forgiven as they were obedient to Christ

in baptism.

Since we also are guilty of the blood of Christ, by virtue of our sin, we too may avail ourselves of the salvation found in that same blood of Christ. Speaking of our fate without Christ, Paul said that we had "no hope" and were "without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.)

There is hope in the blood of Christ. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13.) Paul continues his argument by telling us that Christ broke

down and abolished all the barriers between Jews and Gentiles. "And that he might reconcile both unto God on one body by the cross." (Eph. 2:16.)

The apostles were bold in their proclamation of the gospel. Even though sin may have been committed in ignorance, people were still convicted of their guilt and told how to be reconciled to God through Christ. We must preach the same message today, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23.)

## From Midget To Giant

**Jim Smith, Mooresville, N.C.**

From a grain of mustard seed comes a tree upon which birds can nest. A mighty oak grows from a tiny acorn. And from a two pound, eight ounce "Midget" has flowered a giant Christian lady who does not let afflictions embitter her but who has dedicated herself to being "faithful unto death."

Mrs. Ola Belle Robinette was born on June 6, 1907, in Iredell County, North Carolina. She was so tiny that her first crib was a shoe box padded with cotton. Her family nicknamed her "Midget." They placed her on the fireplace mantle to keep her warm. She survived to be "born again" on May 2, 1971. She was baptized by Hugh Spurgeon in Mooresville, North Carolina.

In 1976 when a stroke left her legs too weak to hold her up, she entered The Oaks Nursing Home in Huntersville, North Carolina, where she is confined to a wheelchair. However, the wheelchair allows her the mobility to visit and encourage others throughout the nursing home.

Upon her arrival there, Mrs. Robinette inquired about Bible classes and found there were none. In January 1977, she inaugurated a Sunday morning Bible class with twelve other patients. Now, in its fourth year, there are between seventy-five and eighty each Sunday. Patients so look forward to the 10:00 a.m. Bible class that they start calling for help to get dressed as early as 6:45. "Pink lady" volunteers arrive

just to dress and assist patients to class and back.

Mrs. Robinette, who has been studying the Bible since she was nine, says that daily lunchtime devotions and the Sunday school class are her spiritual therapy. She loves the Lord, loves people, and loves to tell others about the Lord Jesus Christ. She teaches (not from any quarterly) lesson topics from the Bible such as love or forgiveness.

Mrs. Robinette has been a source of inspiration to both patients and staff at the nursing home as well as to those who visit her. Many visitors have remarked that they went to cheer her up but came away feeling better than they had before the visit. She advises others not to resent being placed in a nursing home. She says, "We are all here because we were sent here to be taken care of. It's a blessing that we have this home to go to in the sunset of our lives. It's not home, but you make it home. Think of blessings instead of afflictions."

Mrs. Robinette's life exemplifies the principle that no matter where you are or in what circumstances, there will be a way to "Go ye into all the world and teach all nations . . . whatsoever I have commanded you."

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# The Christian's Prayer Life (Part 1)

Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC

In the January 1981 issue of the **Bible Herald** there was an article entitled simply, "Weaning Time," in which Tom D. Butterfield, a preacher of the Lord's church at Vienna, West Virginia, very bravely and courageously removes his "shell," and lets the reader take a peek at the preacher! "As preachers," he says, "we are to be the guys with unwavering faith, coupled with a stiff upper lip, and we are to be the ones that can face the illness and death of our loved ones, and lead others to feel that it is in the hands of God, and that we are free from common fear and frustration.

"Frankly folks, if this is what it takes to be a preacher of the gospel, I just flunked the physical! But you see, I am not attempting to justify my fears and failures, I am merely acknowledging them. I am simply saying that the time for me to take my 'weaning' from this physical life more serious, is now." Tom D. is the oldest of two sons of Tom W. Butterfield, who is a well known beloved gospel preacher in the Ohio Valley. And both sons are now well known preachers in their own right. Therefore, as a preacher's son, now himself a preacher, he continues by saying, "I am convinced that the only way for me to have a healthy view of death, both mine, and the death of my loved ones, is for me to be constantly engaged in the 'weaning process' of becoming more and more independent of earth's ability to sustain life and look forward with increasing expectation to the 'better land,' for I am convinced, from my study of the word of God, that the world to come is not to be compared with this vale of tears. It is not that I don't intellectually believe God's promises. If I know my heart, neither is it a matter of unbelief. My problem is that I have 'clay feet' just like yours! I have been having a love affair with life. I'm guilty. I'm sorry. I know now that I must capture the mentality of Paul's admonition of Colossians 3:2, 'Set your affection on things which are above, not on things on the earth.' I am learning in life

that I will never be able to comprehend or capture Paul's view of life and death, until I can say truthfully that heaven holds all to me."

As one familiar with Tom D. Butterfield's life and background, and as one who certainly is a "Johnny come late" as a gospel preacher, I certainly appreciate what this preacher has hereby confessed to all who read his article. I am sure God will richly bless him for doing so. And I am convinced that every one of us will be blessed for making such a self-examination, preacher or not! In fact, the Christian's prayer life, I believe, will be directly affected by how thoroughly and how honestly he or she is able to make such an examination of "self" regarding the difference between flesh control and spirit control of one's life! Such an examination of self regarding the "weaning process" which applies the inspired words of Colossians 3:1-3 to our own selves: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Have we ever really applied this admonition to our self? Do we, who have put on Christ, really seek things above and set our affections on things above, or do we simply agree that it should be done?

The contrast between what controls life is vividly drawn in this epistle of Paul to the Colossians, especially in this third chapter. The flesh is pictured in verse five as "your members" which are upon the earth, and the "old man" of verse nine. While the spirit's control is seen in the language of verse ten: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him." And spirit control is depicted in verses twelve through fifteen with such phrases as "put on," "forebearing," "forgiving," and "let"!

But how does one move from flesh control to spirit control or spirit direction? The answer is recorded in many places, and

under many figures, but Paul had already given the figure of circumcision here in Colossians 2:11-13: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." So, by God's grace, made spiritually alive with Christ, because all past sins have been forgiven.

However, putting off the sins of the flesh — after being made spiritually alive in Christ — is not automatic, nor is it involuntary! We must voluntarily act! Man is now wholly passive in transference of control from flesh to spirit. One must actively renounce flesh control and submit to spirit control or to spirit direction! Even preachers, including this preacher, has "clay feet" just like yours!

Prayer is defined by our dictionaries as "man's offering of adoration, confession, supplication and thanksgiving to the supreme Being." Prayer is that, of course, but it is more than that, for according to 1 John 4:8, "God is love." Here is the "more than that" of the dictionary definition. God is love, and all the laws of God, both physical laws and spiritual laws are by His divine authority! As God's creation, in His own image, man can not escape from the divine authority of God, any more than we can escape from our human form which He created from the dust of the ground.

Authority means law, and even as the important transactions of our daily life are legal, and pertain to law, such as ownership of property, by civil authority, so also, the laws of God pertain to man by His divine authority.

The most important God-given institution, except for Christ's church or kingdom, is the legal arrangement of marriage or the home. But even with this, love is not just based upon a fluctuating human experience. Love and marriage is based on a legal covenant, with which God, the

authority for marriage, guarantees security and reciprocal responsibility. Both partners share responsibility for that God-given relationship.

True love, therefore, must be lawful love, and getting back to our relationship with God, man's relationship with God is not just a matter of falling in love with the Lord. That would not be lawful love or legal love. Therefore, you see, the marriage law or the covenant of marriage reflects the mode of the Creator-human relationship. God's fellowship with man is based on a covenant which offers the human party security, but like the marriage covenant, it is security with responsibility. Man's union with God must be altogether a righteous union! A union of unity with God which is lawful, with the responsibility of obedience to the authority, God the Father.

As we think therefore of prayer, we must remember that our relationship with God is based on the laws of His authority, which are all based on the law that God is love. But loving God can be true love only when it is lawful love. Love alone is not enough, it must be "love and obey" whether we be a Christian or a Christian who preaches the gospel.

In James 5:16 we are told that, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Not just any prayer, not just any man. And the examples are many in the Scriptures of righteous men fervently appealing, fervently crying to God in prayer. Earnest, fervent, humble, and effectual prayers from the very heart of just or righteous men availeth much.

That kind of a Christian is the friend of God, the kind of a Christian that God loves. Those who are righteous, those who are responsible in the covenant of fellowship with God, which offers security. Those who listen and yield to God's law of love. Those who pray fervently, with tears, "Oh God, let **thy** will be done in me!" Not let my, but let thy will be done!

As faithful Christians we need to say with the apostle Paul, "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all



dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:13-15.) What was it that constrained Paul and his fellow apostles? The love of Christ, the love which is God, which was lived personally by Christ, perfectly, compelleth, constrains, controls, rules, or motivates us, Paul says, whether we be beside ourselves or whether we be sober, it is to God, and for your cause.

Also 2 Corinthians 5:17 reveals Paul's inspired summation, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are

become new." Because Christ's perfect love constrains Christians, because of Christ's perfect example of God's love, not only are we constrained, Paul is saying, but we are motivated to never again live unto ourselves, but to live unto Christ who died for us and rose again. Our new life in Christ, therefore, as was our Saviour's life, will be lived as servants serving others! And, our daily prayer life will therefore include prayers and supplications for all other people, not only for others who are in covenant relationship with God, in Christ, but also in behalf of others who have never yet come to a knowledge of the truth and obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Matthew 12:41

**James Meadows, Spartanburg, S.C.**

"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." The Lord's statement, "they repented at (eis) the preaching of Jonas," is often used by Baptist debators and preachers to evade the force of the preposition **eis** in Acts 2:38 "for the remission of sins." They claim that **eis** certainly has a retrospective significance and means "on account of." They boldly declare that men did not repent **in order** to get Jonah to preach, but they repented **on account** of his preaching. In the same way Acts 2:38 means, they assert, that baptism is **on account** of the remission of sins already possessed. This cannot be true for several reasons.

**First**, the word "preaching" is a noun, not a verb, and does not refer to the **act** of preaching, but to the **message: that which was preached**. It is a translation of the Greek noun **kerugma**. W.E. Vine defines it as "a proclamation by a herald, denotes a message, a preaching (the substance of which is preached as distinct from the act of preaching)." The word refers to "that which is promulgated by a herald or public crier, a proclamation by herald, in the N.T.

the message or proclamation by the heralds of God or Christ." (Thayer.) The reference in this passage is to "the proclamation of the necessity of repentance and reformation made by the prophet Jonah." (**Greek-English Lexington**, p. 346.)

**Second**, the Septuagint has this same Greek noun at Jonah 3:2 where God instructed Jonah, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the **preaching** that I bid thee." Jonah was to **preach** (verb: the act of preaching) the **preaching** (noun: the message preached). **The preaching** definitely refers to the **message** — the substance or contents — that God gave to Jonah.

**Third**, the Greek word **eis** appears about 1700 places in the New Testament and translators have used some 48 English words or phrases to express its meaning in various contexts. In most places, however, it is rendered **against, among, at, by, concerning, for, hereunto, in, into, that, till, to, to the end, toward, unto, and with**, but never is it translated "because of." (L.O. Sanderson.) "There is not a reputable scholar in the world that will assert that the preposition **eis** is retrospective — looks backward — in meaning." (Guy Woods.)

**Fourth**, it becomes perfectly clear that Jonah preached a certain kind of life. This



life was his **preaching** — his message. The men of Nineveh got into this life by repentance. "The men of Nineveh will rise with the leaders of this age at the judgment and condemn them, for they turned to the **message of Jonah.**" (Williams' Translation. Dr. Charles B. Williams was once professor of Greek in Union University, a prominent Baptist school in Jackson, Tenn. His translation has gained wide recognition among scholars of all religious bodies.) "That is, the people of Nineveh repented, and the proof of it was their 'turning to practice the message preached by Jonah,' putting their faith in Jonah and forsaking their sins — something prospective." (Dr. Charles B. Williams.) "They repented **into** the preaching of Jonah. This is not idiomatic English, but it conveys the exact

thought which a Greek would derive from the original. The term **preaching** as put for the course of life required by the preaching, and it is asserted that they repented **into** this. Their repentance, in other words, brought them into the course of life which the preaching required. If Jesus had merely said they repented **in consequence** of Jonah's preaching, he would have stopped short with the internal change which they underwent; but he chooses to go further, and indicate the terminus of their repentance, that it brought them into the condition which the preaching demanded." (J.W. McGarvey.)

Acts 2:38 still teaches baptism "for the remission of sins" and Matthew 12:41 gives absolutely no support to those that claim otherwise.

## Something New

**Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, Tn.**

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) There is something exciting about getting something new. But as time goes on, that newness eventually wears off. Constant use causes our cars to break down, our furniture to become scratched,

and our clothes to become worn. Soon we are ready to get rid of those old things and replace them with something new again. And the cycle repeats itself.

But this should not be the case with Christianity. Paul was telling the Corinthians that a person who got into Christ would necessarily have to cast off the old life of sin, but a replacement is offered immediately to take up its space in the believer's life. It is the **new** life in Christ. That new life should excite us more than any new things.

As we enter into each new day we continually encourage one another to make sure that the newness of the saved life does not wear off.

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# Editorial Glimmerings

While at Carolina Bible Camp this summer, we were asked to write on the following question: "Are Christians hypocrites when they fail to give as they have prospered?"

While we want to sincerely deal with this question, it requires us to do more than we are capable of doing with the information we have. To answer it correctly we would have to know all the motivations of each one who does not give as he should. To be a hypocrite is to pretend to be something one is not; to be a hypocrite in giving, one would have to pretend that he was giving out of love, or that he was giving more than he does, or giving for a reason other than the one he claims (cf. Acts 5:1-12).

No doubt some are hypocritical in their giving and in their failure to give, but we suspect there are many other motives, rationalizations, excuses, and perhaps some reasons why people do not give as we may think they have prospered. We cannot judge motives, unless the action clearly indicates the motive. Thus rather than generalizing, each case would have to be considered upon its own merits or demerits. Perhaps the querist wanted to ask, "Is one a hypocrite when he pretends to be a Christian and yet does not give as he is prospered?" If this is the case, then the answer would not be hard to come by. It would seem odd indeed for one to profess to follow Christ and not be willing to give, not only of his money but also of his time and talent . . . actually his everything! He would not necessarily be a hypocrite because he did not give, but a good case could certainly be made against him for pretending to follow Christ and yet not being willing to give, to sacrifice, to lay his all at the feet of Jesus.

Here are some principles that should help us all in our giving:

1. God loved us enough, even while we were yet His enemies, to give His Son to die on the cross for us (John 3:16). God's love led Him to give heaven's most precious Jewel for us. In view of this, what does a

failure to give say about our love for God?

2. The love of Christ for lost man motivated Him to leave heaven, come to this earth, live among sinful men, and die the cruel death on the cross to provide the scheme of human redemption (Phil. 2:5-11). "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) The sacrifice of Christ was a gift of His love. When we fail to give as we have prospered, what does that reveal about our love for Christ?

3. The early church gave generously to spread the good news of Christ and to aid those who were in need (1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8-9). Had they not loved the Lord enough to give, the church would have died in Jerusalem where it started. It could not have survived without their contribution. What does a failure to give say about our love for the church, the lost, and those who are in need?

4. The Lord Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35.) Do we truly believe His words? If we fail to give, what does that say about our belief of the Lord's words?

5. Some in the early church sold what they had and gave it to be used by the apostles in the cause of Christ (Acts 4:34-5:11). This should clearly indicate the fact that they considered some things more important in the life of a Christian than material possessions. Their sights were set on values higher than this world (Col. 3:1, 2). But if we selfishly hoard our possessions, what does this say about our attitude toward material things and our sense of value?

6. The Christian is taught, both by command and example, to give of his means in the service of God (Acts 4:34-36; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2). How could one be consistent and teach that faith, repentance, baptism, the Lord's supper, prayer, etc., are essential acts of obedience because the Bible teaches them and yet conclude that giving is not

essential (when the same Lord teaches them all in the same Book)?

7. Look at our own salvation: someone somewhere gave so that the gospel could be preached to us (and we ought to be eternally grateful to them, even though we may never know in this life who they were and they may never know that it was through their giving we were reached). We are debtors to them. And we are debtors to those who have never heard (Rom. 1:14-16). We have received a good thing and we are therefore

debtors to pass it on. If we do not give, someone may never have the chance to hear the saving truth of the gospel. If we believe the world is lost in sin, and if we believe the gospel is God's power to save, how can we be true to our convictions without giving generously?

In short, Christ is our example to follow (1 Pet. 2:21). He gave (2 Cor. 8:9). How could we be a follower of Him if we fail to give?



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

### Abroad:

**Israel** — Ernest Stewart was the first missionary of the churches of Christ to proclaim pure New Testament Christianity in Israel. Now, after an absence of almost a decade, he will be returning to that work, leaving the United States on August 4. Brother Stewart will be accompanied by his wife, Marlene and son, Bryan. The Stewarts will be living in Herzliya, a suburb of Tel-Aviv, which is Israel's largest city. Brother Stewart plans to renew his former work with the Arab brethren in Nazareth and the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and other places. The Stewarts plan to remain in Israel indefinitely as they seek to lend stability to the work there.

**China** — Significant changes in the governments view toward Christianity are taking place, according to a report from Hong Kong by brother Jim Waldron. The Hong Kong Standard of April 13, 1981 reported that the next session of the National People's Congress would probably amend the Chinese constitution on religion. The constitution presently allows citizens the right to enjoy the freedom to believe in religion as well as the freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism. The criticism of the current clause is that while it does allow belief in religion, it does not allow the propagation of religion and does allow the propagation of atheism. Opponents of the clause hope for a revival of the 1954 constitutional law which stipulates

only the right of citizens to enjoy the freedom to believe in religion.

It is clear that China has moved a long way from the radical Marxist view of religion. Even though new churches are closely watched and regulated by the government, there is increasing religious freedom in China. To date the churches of Christ have responded to this tremendous evangelistic opportunity with two American families currently planning to enter China with the gospel. These families are now in Hong Kong and are presently outmanned by several denomination groups and the Mormons. The Mormons have fifteen families, 120 single males and 45 single woman preparing to go into China with their false doctrine. Here is an opportunity for the church to offer more than lip-service to world evangelism.

### At Home:

**Chicago** — Christians in Chicago are getting ready for a massive campaign to be conducted July 1-5, 1981. This is the second such campaign in the last ten years for Chicago. Workers for the campaign are expected to number in the thousands with T.O. Jackson of Oklahoma City and William Jones of Chicago conducting training workshops. A gospel meeting will be conducted during the week with Jack Evans, president of Southwestern Christian College, doing the preaching.

**Abilene, Texas** — Dr. William J. Teague

Carolina Christian



has been named president-elect of Abilene Christian University, succeeding Dr. John C. Stevens, who will become the school's second chancellor. Brother Teague will begin his duties as president on August 27.

**Murfreesboro, Tennessee** — The Main Street church of Christ in Manchester, Tenn., the primary sponsors of the **Tell You the Truth** radio broadcast, the Ashwood church in Nashville, Tenn., and the Crieve Hall church, also of Nashville, have reached an agreement for a combined broadcast effort that establishes a nationwide radio network. Previously the regular evangelist for the **Tell You the Truth** program has been Winston Tynes of the

Bethany church of Christ in McMinnville, Tenn. He will now be joined by Rubel Shelley, of Ashwood, and Tom Holland of Crieve Hall. Brother Tynes applauded the new effort as "a great triumph in the campaign to reach lost souls throughout America." The network will be depending heavily upon the involvement of local churches throughout the country. Those interested in more information are asked to write: Winston Tynes, Tell You the Truth, P.O. Box 284, McMinnville, Tenn. 37110. Many Christians in the Carolinas may remember brother Tynes as a former minister of the Warners Chapel congregation in Clemmons many years ago.

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### THINKING THINGS THROUGH

## Law And Atonement

While both words are a large part of our vocabulary, we need to become better acquainted with the function of law and with the necessity of atonement — atonement apart from the works of law. Perhaps we have never fully appreciated the fact that we cannot be saved by law . . . by any law! It is not the function of law to save. And certainly if we do not understand the fact that we cannot be saved by law, then we cannot fully appreciate atonement, which is necessary only if there is no other way to be saved. Law demands justice; atonement provides the means whereby justice can be done to the law and yet mercy shown to the sinner.

Law is useless unless it has a penalty (in fact, those who know law say that there cannot be a law without penalty), and once the law is violated the penalty **must** be paid before the law can be satisfied — a failure to pay the penalty nullifies the law. And a nullified law is a useless law (or as the lawyer would say, it is no law at all). Law (including the law of Moses) makes no provisions for pardon. Law knows only penalty; pardon belongs to another realm. Pardon is, when it is lawfully discharged, a remedial act — an act to correct some injustice that has occurred in the process of trying to carry out the law and administer

the penalty justly. Only when a mistake (an injustice) is made in carrying out the process is pardon lawful. Where no injustice has occurred, pardon outrages the law. Thus, as far as the law is concerned, pardon is an act of justice (applying corrective measures), not an act of mercy (setting aside the law's penalty). For this reason, when a law is violated, there is no lawful way to escape the penalty. Paul could therefore say, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20.) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3:28.)

As all Bible students know, sin is a violation of God's law. Or as John says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4.) The penalty of sin is death. When God placed the first man in the garden of Eden He prohibited him from eating of a certain tree, "For," said He, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17.) To eat would be to disobey God's word. To violate God's word would be a sin. And the penalty of sin would be death. When man violated the will of God there was no possible way of escaping the penalty. Death was inevitable. It still

is. Paul says, "For the wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23.) This is God's law. It cannot be set aside or ignored. Once sin is committed, once the law is violated, the penalty must be paid before the law can be satisfied or the sinner justified. Pardon is not part of the law. Death must be paid for sin.

But Paul goes on to say, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23; see also 3:9; 5:12; 11:32.) Now if we have all sinned, and if the penalty of sin is death, and if the violated law cannot be satisfied and the sinner justified until the penalty is paid, then, according to law, in which there is no provision for pardon, we must **all** die, be lost eternally, be separated from God for ever and ever. There is no escape from this (as far as law is concerned) because there is no possible way for one who has sinned to escape the penalty without nullifying the law (which in this case is the word of God, which is impossible to nullify). Were the penalty of the law set aside or ignored the law would lose its force — it would no longer be law. The law, therefore, offers no hope of salvation. Thus by the law no man can be justified before God.

How then can a sinner (one who has violated the law and therefore must pay the penalty of death) be saved? The answer to this question is the heart of the book of Romans. After showing that all have sinned, and that it is impossible for anyone to be saved from sin by law, Paul states, "To declare, I say, at this time his

righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.) Here Paul states the problem of salvation (and the necessity of atonement): God could not be just (do justice to His word, which said that the penalty of sin was death) and set aside the penalty of sin; yet God desired to justify (save) the sinner. How could this be done? Paul deals with this problem from Romans 3:20 to 11:36. He shows that the sinner was doomed but that Christ stepped in and died in his stead. The death of Christ pays the sin penalty — that is, it satisfied the demands of law. God Himself has provided the sinner's ransom. He can now be just and still justify the sinner. The substitutionary death of Christ pays the sinner's penalty. What the law could not do (provide justification for the sinner) Christ has done by His death on the cross. This is what we call atonement.

The sinner (which includes all responsible people) can now, by accepting Christ as Lord and by fully obeying Him as such, approach the throne of God with an acceptable substitute for his death, the blood of Christ. The death of Christ pays his penalty, that is, it satisfies the demands of the law. The law's penalty is paid but the sinner is free. Or in short, the law is satisfied and the sinner is justified, justified not by law but by the death of Christ.

We must conclude therefore, from the teaching of the Bible and from all law, that salvation must come by the atoning blood of Christ, not by law.

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## Jesus Only

### Jim E. Waldron, Hong Kong

"Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut. 6:4.) This is most famous of Scripture quotations among the Jewish people. Their daily worship begins with it.

It declares that the God of the Bible is the absolute infinite one that is to be adored

and worshipped, but this verse also shows something of the plurality within the one supreme Deity for the text says, "Jehovah our God (Hebrew plural Elohim) is one Jehovah." Connecting this with expression of God speaking of Himself as "us" and "our" in such passages as Genesis 1:26, we see that the Old Testament does teach the uni-plural nature of our God.

However, it was left for the New Testament witness to reveal to us the persons

who partake of the nature of God or the Godhead. For example Philippians 2:5-7 says, "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."

This passage shows that the one revealed to us as Jesus Christ existed with God in the form of God before emptying himself to take human form. Concerning this we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. And the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2.) "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten

from the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.) Again Jesus himself prayed: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with God before the world was." (John 17:5.)

Thus the Scriptures show that Jesus existed with God before the world was, and before He took on the form of a servant, and that He was given the world by God His Father.

There is the Father (one), and the Son (one). They both partake of Godhead (Acts 17:29; Matt. 2:23; Eph. 4:6).

To claim that "Jesus Only" makes up the Godhead is to deny the Father and Son relationship. Such is an antichrist doctrine (1 John 5:22).

# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.  
**NORTH CAROLINA**

**Henderson.** Fred Starnes will be preaching at Henderson beginning in August.

**Burlington.** From the Mebane Street "Beacon": "The church of Christ in Burlington will be 30 years old in July of this year. We have been fortunate to have had some very fine preachers that have included Howard Winters, presently Editor of the **Carolina Christian**, Eugene Clevenger, and Neil Lightfoot, both of whose brotherhood contributions are widely known. Others have included Jim Huskey, Larry Walker, C.R. Franks, and our present minister, David Vaughn.

"The church began in Burlington with a tent meeting in 1951. Then after meeting in

temporary quarters that included a room over a drug store and a funeral home, the members began worshipping in a basement built on a donated lot in 1953-54.

"In 1956 a small building was constructed on a lot on Vaughn Road with much sacrifice and personal involvement. A building program was started in 1966 as we began to approach the limits of the facilities. Then in 1972-73 the current building was erected with a seating capacity of about 350, with adequate classrooms."

A Homecoming was held July 26, with Howard Winters as the guest speaker.

**Raleigh.** Phil Pugh will be working with Brooks Avenue as campus minister at NCSU. He was converted at Raleigh nine years ago and now holds a M.A. from Abilene Christian University. His wife is Katherine.

**Jacksonville.** A homecoming was held July 5 with 300 present.

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### North Carolina

Raleigh, N.C. Evangelism Seminar ..... September 4-6  
W. Jefferson, David Pharr ..... September 13-18

### South Carolina

W. Columbia, James Meadows ..... September 27-Oct. 2



**West Jefferson.** The recent campaign was a tremendous success. There were six baptisms and three restorations. Attendance and contributions were above average. A more detailed report will be given in the September issue.

#### **N.C. Baptisms**

Raleigh, 4; Wilkesboro, 4; Helen St., Fayetteville, 3; Broad Street, Statesville, 1; Burlington, 1; Abilene, Statesville, 1; Providence Rd., Charlotte, 2; Highland Acres, Statesville, 14; W. Jefferson, 6. Total: 36.

#### **Highland Acres, Statesville**

CHESTER C. VAUGHAN, Reporting: I am very happy and elated about the work here in Statesville at the Highland Acres church of Christ (formerly known as the Belmont church of Christ). After a long and arduous, frustrating struggle with our building project, our Lord has blessed us tremendously and we are grateful. On July 12, 1981 we conducted our first services in our new building, at which time we began our annual gospel meeting, with brother Frank McElveen of the Jacksonville Road church of Christ doing the preaching. The Lord blessed our efforts with thirteen baptisms and five restorations, making a total of 22 baptisms for this year through Friday night when the meeting closed, plus one baptism on Lord's day past. We thank all

our brothers and sisters for the work they did and the forceful preaching done by brother McElveen during this special effort to reach those outside of Christ and his church.

The Lord willing, we hope to be the host for the 1982 Carolina Lectures. Please pray for us that we may continue to glorify God. Our new mailing address is Highland Acres church of Christ, 1301 McLaughlin Street, Statesville, NC 28677.

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Greenville.** Bill Goodpasture will be the new minister at Northeast.

**Spartanburg.** James Meadows will end his work with Central on August 16. He will be available for gospel meetings and workshops on church growth and discipline.

**Columbia.** Their Sixth Annual Youth Rally will be held August 21-23 at St. Andrews Road church. The theme will be "What Shall it Be?" Speakers are Dick Weber of Atlanta and Jody Vickery of Freed-Hardeman College. This event is planned for Junior and Senior High students. Housing will be provided.

**Rock Hill.** Jeff Lovitt will serve as assistant minister at Charlotte Avenue. Jeff and his wife Paula are Oklahoma natives and come to Rock Hill from Harding University.

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## S.C. Baptisms

Newberry, 1; Myrtle Beach, 1, St. Andrews Rd., Columbia, 1; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 2; Greer, 1; Central, Spartanburg, 3; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; Northeast, Greenville, 2. Total: 12.

## FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE

"Christian Caring: Reach Out and

Change a Life" is the theme of Women's Day at Freed-Hardeman College, Saturday, September 12.

A first-time event for the college, Women's Day is planned "to provide spiritual growth opportunities for Christian women and to encourage their service in the church and in their communities," said Arnelle Adcock, one of the chairmen.

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# A Look At Books

## Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

**What the Bible Says About Faith and Opinion**, W. Robert Palmer, College Press Publishing Co., Joplin, Missouri, 1980, 357 pages. Cloth.

This is an excellent discussion of the study of Biblical interpretation. The author establishes the proper approach to Bible study by setting forth the following premises: (1) God has spoken to man; (2) That this revelation is the Bible; (3) The Bible of our translations today is substantially identical to the original words; (4) The Bible is infallible as God's word to man; (5) The Bible is complete and final; (6) The Bible is an intelligible and understandable message; (7) The Bible can be understood by man.

Palmer then launches into a discussion of Precept, Precedent and Opinion. For the most part, no criticism need be offered of the approach to the subject or the definitions offered. As a matter of fact, we cite his conclusion regarding the line between faith and opinion: "(1) It is definitely there; (2) It is not fluid, nor elusive, nor arbitrary; (3) It will be seen only by growth in the wisdom of God; (4) It is the prize of only those who by implicit faith and obedience to revealed truth seek it honestly, diligently, intelligently, and charitably. Thus, some men, whether scholarly or uneducated, will see it far more clearly than others. Its existence is not relative, but its apprehension will be relative. (5) Therefore, it is an ideal goal toward which all men must work, but which, like any other Christian goal, is never perfectly attainable because of human limitations." Palmer has done some excellent work in establishing a proper methodology for determining what the Bible

teaches. We only wish he would be consistent in the application of his principles. If he would apply the principles in his book consistently he would give up his musical instrument and the breach between the heirs of the restoration movement would be healed.

**What the Bible Says About Faith and Opinion** is worthy of careful reading and study.

**What the Bible Says About Praise and Promise**, James Van Buren and Don DeWalt. College Press Publishing Co., Joplin, Missouri, 457 pages, cloth.

This is really two books in one. Van Buren discusses **What the Bible Says About Praise**. In this work a general survey of praise throughout the Bible is given. Some of the chapter headings are "The Praises of Israel," "The Ingredients of Praise," "The Objects of Praise," "The Perversion of Praise," and "The Cultivation of Praise." This is a subject that is addressed far too infrequently in our pulpits. The reading of this material will raise one's awareness of the praise-worthiness of God Almighty.

In **What the Bible Says About Promise** Don DeWalt takes the reader on a devotional tour of the promises of the Bible. The format makes the work especially suitable for daily devotional reading. However, the index of Scripture in which promises are made is a valuable study aid. Five hundred and fifty promises are discussed and another 450 are listed. One cannot read this material without being overwhelmed by the manifestation of God's care that is demonstrated in His precious promises. This is a good book and will bring the reader to a greater awareness of the goodness of God.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO.9, SEPTEMBER 1981



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# EDITORIAL

## A MAN OF THE BOOK

In their excellent and enlightening book, **Happiness Is a Choice**, Frank B. Minirth and Paul D. Meier say, "No one will ever be a man of God unless he is a man of the Book." This rings true to the Scriptures and ought to strike home with all of us. The Book is not just a Book preachers should know and quote from in their sermons; it is a Book with which every Christian ought to be intimate, a book to live by and direct every action of one's life. To be a man of the Book:

1. One must **believe** it, believe it intensely, believe it honestly, believe it completely, believe it as the word of God. John said, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:30, 31.) But how could one believe the signs, and thus believe in Christ as the Savior, without first believing that which is written? The signs are recorded in the Scriptures. But the Scriptures are trustworthy. They can, therefore, be believed without doubt or questioning.

2. One must **know** the Book. The Lord does not infuse knowledge directly into the hearts and minds of His people. He gives it indirectly, through the study and practice of His word. "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." (Ps. 119:104.) "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Ps. 119:105.) "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Ps. 119:130.) Thus to **know** the Book one must study it or write it on his heart.

3. One must **follow** the instructions of the Book. Paul says that the righteousness of God, the righteousness which is given by God, is revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:16, 17). What makes an act righteous? Not just the act in and of itself. What God has

revealed as His will is righteousness (Ps. 119:172). Nothing else is in His sight. There is nothing inherently righteous about faith, baptism, the Lord's supper, giving, sacrifice, etc. Why then would it be an act of righteousness to be baptized, to eat the Lord's supper, or to make a contribution? It would not be apart from obedience to the revealed will of God. They are righteousness when done by a Christian (or in becoming a Christian) because God has commanded them and He counts them as acts of righteousness because one in doing them is following divine instructions. Thus when a Christian takes the Lord's supper (in obedience to the instruction given in the word of truth) the Lord counts his action as righteousness; it would not be so counted when taken by a non-Christian.

To be a man of the Book one must therefore believe, know, and follow the Scriptures as the inspired word of God.

## DRUNKENNESS — CAUSE AND EFFECT

The Bible says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.)

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“Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.” (Prov. 23:31.) “But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.” (Isa. 28:7.) Are these passages (and many similar ones) condemning drunkenness or are they condemning strong drink? Brethren answer this question differently, but we think the Scriptures are as clear as the noon day sun in teaching that the effect (drunkenness) is condemned because the cause (drinking) is evil.

For many years (in fact all our Christian life) we have believed and argued that the Bible condemns the drinking of alcoholic beverages (the cause of drunkenness) in any amount for the purpose of intoxication. This simply means that the effect (drunkenness, to one degree or another) inevitably follows the cause (the drinking of strong drink). Thus if one takes one drink he is one drink drunk. But there are those who say that this is a faulty and foolish argument because the Bible condemns drunkenness (the effect), not drinking (the cause). We doubt not that many consider this foolish reasoning, but it is certainly not so when viewed from the standpoint of the Scriptures. In fact, the exact opposite is true.

Those who try to justify drinking but condemn drunkenness find themselves in the undesirable position of affirming that God in His infinite wisdom condemns the effects (drunkenness) but not the cause (strong drink). All will agree that the cause of drunkenness is drinking. This is obvious. But, according to those who think our contention is foolish, God approves (or at least does not condemn) drinking. He only condemns the effects — the results of drinking. But how can God approve the cause and yet condemn the effects? How can there be an effect without the cause? And how can there be the cause without the effect? Since the cause and effect are inevitably tied together, how can one be approved and the other condemned? In short, how can there

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be drunkenness without drinking? And vice versa, how can there be drinking without drunkenness? The truth about the matter: there cannot be! We thus believe that the effect is condemned because the cause is condemned — the effect is evil because the cause is evil.

The Bible therefore gets to the root of the matter by condemning both the cause and the effect — the results are evil because the cause is evil. The tree is known by its fruits. Our Lord said it: “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.” (Matt. 12:33.)

## ONE DRINK

There is absolutely no doubt about it: one drink effects the drinker, and it is impossible to anticipate the damage which may occur, both to the individual and to those around him. This fact should be weighed heavily, seriously considered, and sincerely thought through by those who say that the Bible only condemns drunkenness, not drinking. It has long been our judgment that when one drinks even one drink he must accept the full responsibility of what may happen as a result or consequence of that drink. He should know in advance that the alcohol is going to cloud or drug his mind to some degree and cause him to act or react in ways he would not otherwise act. To emphasize the seriousness of this matter, we lift the following, written by Kenneth Davis, from the Cape Fear bulletin, Fayetteville, N.C.:

“This is a true story. UPI reported it as it happened. A man by the name of Wilson Thomas Turner was sitting in a bar. The place was Brandenton, Florida. The time, September 12, 1964. He said to himself, ‘One more drink won’t hurt.’ You might call it ‘one for the road.’ He bought another bottle to carry with him.

“He got into his car and started home. He had done it many times and his driving had always been good before. He started home. He had had a hard day and was anxious to get home and see his son, Randell, who was in the fifth grade. He had grown up so fast and Turner was proud of him. He



always liked to spend some time with his son.

"As he sped down the road, it seemed that he went faster and faster. Maybe the last drink dulled his senses some, but, he was in control, he thought, and so what did it matter? Suddenly, from a side street a boy on a bicycle appeared in front of the car. He swerved to miss, but struck the boy. For fear perhaps, the man left the scene. Later the police came to his home and arrested him. He was in the attic with the bottle that he had purchased crying, as he tried to drown the event out of his mind. He was put into jail but was released to go to the funeral of the young man his car had struck. This was the worst thing that ever happened in his life.

"The newspapers told the story and added one more fact: The young man who had been killed was Turner's only son, Randell! Turner had thought, just one drink won't hurt.

"'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' (Prov. 20:1.)"

## DRINKING AND YOUTH

Drinking among young people, even as

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early as Junior High, is developing into an alarming situation (or at least this is so for all right-thinking people). But this problem is not so much the shame of youth as it is the older generation who have argued that it is not wrong to make, sell, and consume alcoholic beverages. The current generation has provided them with this evil and led them into this infernal trap. We urge you to consider the following, lifted from **The Sword of the Lord**, which in turn took it from **Christian Victory**:

"A nationwide survey indicates that by the time they reach the sophomore year in high school, only three in ten students are non-drinkers. The survey, conducted by questionnaire, was a follow-up to a 1974 study of 13,000 students in grades seven through twelve. The results indicate that about a third of high school students are moderate to heavy drinkers. A heavy drinker was regarded as one who drank at least one each week and had at least five drinks on a typical drinking occasion. More than three-fifths of the students surveyed reported that they drank at least once a month. Three out of 10 high school drinkers could be classified as 'problem drinkers,' students who were drunk at least six times in a year, had run-ins with the police because of their drinking, suffered in school or had problems with friends, family or driving."

With this much of a problem among youth, the future leaders of the nation, and with the problem growing worse with each passing year, what can we expect in the years ahead? How can those who say that drunkenness, not drinking, is the only thing to which the Bible addresses itself going to handle or correct this situation — what solution do they have to offer? If drinking itself is not wrong, then how could it be wrong for youth to drink? Why not tell them that the holy Scriptures stamps its okay on drinking just so long as they do not become drunk? Let them know that the cause (drinking) is not an evil; it is only the effect (drunkenness). This way they can calculate the precise number of drinks (even down to the last drop) they can drink without becoming drunk.

Hogwash!

# The Kind Of Music America Listens To

**Max Patterson, Henderson, TN**

When Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn came to America, he addressed the 1978 graduation class at Harvard University. He said, "The human soul longs for things higher, warmer, and purer than those offered by today's . . . intolerable music."

Indeed, since the sixties, cultism has exploded, Humanism has made great inroads into the mass media and public education, and liberalism in religion has ruled the day. It is no wonder our music has been sadly affected.

In 1967 the Beatles came out with the album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." In a review in the September 22, 1967, issue of *Time* magazine, the album was said to be "drenched in drugs." In 1971 John Lennon himself told *Rolling Stone* magazine that the Beatles were engaged in pushing drugs via their music. Jerry Rubin wrote in his work "Do It," published by Simon and Schuster, "We see rock 'n' roll and dope as part of a communist plot to take over America." He also said, "We've combined youth, music, sex, drugs, and rebellion with treason, and that's a combination hard to beat."

But drugs are not the only problem. Some modern music pushes the idea of Humanism and liberal existentialism: "Nothing is wrong or immoral if no one gets hurt. If it feels good, it's cool. Everyone should be as free as possible to 'do his own thing,' since there are no rules." Jimmy Morrison enunciated this philosophy when he wrote: "Man, I'd like to see a little nakedness. Grab your friend and love him. There are no laws. There are no rules."

Some music today is downright blasphemy. Consider Johnny Rotten's "Anarchy in the U.K."

*I am anti-Christ.*

*I am an anarchist.*

*Don't know what I want,*

*But I know how to get it.*

*I want to destroy passers-by,*

*'Cos I want to bring*

*Anarchy in the U.K.*

Some songs are revolutionary. A recent song of Elton John's has these lyrics:

*Behind four walls of stone*

*The rich man sleeps.*

*It's time we put the flame torch*

*To their keep.*

John also has a song which blasphemes the 5th Commandment. He sings:

*Hey kids, plug into the faithless.*

*Maybe they're blinded.*

*But Bennie makes them ageless.*

*We shall survive, let us take ourselves  
along,*

*Where we fight our parents out in the  
street*

*To find out who's right and who's wrong.*

John Lennon espouses the humanistic approach in "Imagine."

*Imagine there's no heaven*

*It's easy if you try.*

*No hell below us,*

*Above us only sky.*

*Imagine all the people*

*Living for today.*

Dr. Patricia Schiller, a psychologist and director of the American Association of Sex Education and Counselors, measured the erotic effect of some of the songs youngsters were listening to and found them very provocative and arousing. In her studies, Dr. Schiller noted a number of girls (ages 12-21) who admitted that the insistent beat and the "suggestive lyrics" excited them to take part in sex play and sometimes in love-making. She further explained that the younger girls were psychologically disturbed and seemed to have trouble expressing their feelings. An example of the kind of song involved is the Rolling Stones "Let's Spend the Night Together."

David A. Noebel, a noted author and lecturer in the field of music, has summed up this whole problem extremely well (speaking of rock music, in particular) when he said, "It has been a blight on America's most precious natural resource — her youth. It is analogous to the bubonic plague that infected Europe in the 17th century. Nearly everything it touches is repugnant to good taste, mental health and spiritual well

being.”

Noebel continues in this summary, “Rock has turned our young ladies into sex machines, our young men into dirt balls and has abolished pride in personal appearance. It has degraded love, sex, and marriage while upgrading lust and lasciviousness. It has made a mockery of morality and has encouraged bisexuality and homosexuality. And while attacking God, Jesus Christ, the Bible and Christianity, it has expressed sympathy for the devil. It has opened the door to the occult and

paganism. It has alienated children from parents and widened the generation gap. It has downgraded patriotism and preached violent revolution. It has tarnished our nation’s culture and promoted and sustained the drug culture. It has become our teenager’s number one addiction.”

We are quickly getting to the place where we do not blush at evil (Jer. 6:15), and because of the blindness of our heart, we are past feeling (Eph. 4:18, 19). We need to arise out of our sleep before it is too late.

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# This I Know About Abortion

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

As president of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life and a member of the executive board of the National Right to Life Committee, I have learned a great deal about abortion and its victims. As a minister of Christ, I know of the challenge of counseling women with problem pregnancies and of women who are haunted by their decision to abort.

1. I know that in 1978 one and one half million unborn babies died in abortion. Each day of the week approximately 4,000 victims are dispatched. Since the Supreme Court’s ruling on January 22, 1973, seven million preborn infants have been legally destroyed.

2. I know that it is now legal to abort a living human baby through the ninth month of pregnancy. All that is necessary is for an abortionist doctor to certify the abortion is for the mother’s mental or physical health. (U.S. News and World Report, March 4, 1974, p. 44.) New York state alone had 4,000 third trimester abortions back in 1971. Many of these babies are delivered alive and are abandoned to die without attention. Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee, handles such cases in our state.

3. I know that parents have lost their right to have a voice in the abortion decision of their minor daughter and husbands have lost their right to protect the life of their unborn child. (Supreme Court,

Dansforth vs. Planned Parenthood decision.)

4. I know that only one half of one percent of all abortions are done for all the hardship reasons such as rape, deformity and danger to the mother’s life. All the rest are for convenience sake.

5. I know that abortion means a cruel barbaric death for the baby. Early abortions are by suction-curettage and tear the tiny baby to pieces. Midterm abortions are effected by saline aminiocentesis. The saline acts as an acid that burns the baby to death over a 4-8 hour period. Third trimester abortions are usually done by hysterectomy (Caesarean section) and the live baby must then be disposed of. Successful abortions are always fatal to the baby, who, by the way, is not anesthetized.

6. I know that abortion is dangerous to the mother; both physically and psychologically. According to the **Chicago Sun Times**, 12 women have died in Chicago after legal abortions in recent months. Women undergoing “safe legal” abortions run a nine percent risk of sterility, a fourteen percent risk for habitual spontaneous miscarriage in future pregnancies and a four hundred percent increase in tubal pregnancies. A statistical study from the Westminster group of hospitals in England showed that women who had had abortions were nine times more likely to commit suicide than those who did not.

7. I know that legal abortion has not

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solved the social problems it was expected to solve. We have had a three hundred percent increase in battered babies since 1973. Illegal abortion has not been reduced in eight of ten nations who legalized the procedure according to Dr. Thomas Hilgers of Mayo Clinic.

8. I know that God hates hands that shed innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-17). Babies killed by abortion are the most innocent of all. God did not say "Thou shalt not abort" but He did say "Thou shalt not kill." (Ex. 20:13.) He further stated that "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. 9:6.) Abortionist doctors and promoters will face God's law in judgment.

A minister recently asked the question,

"Would you condemn, condone or support your neighbor if she talked to you about an abortion?" As a minister who is committed to upholding the message of God, I would inform her of the humanity of the unborn child, of the danger to her of abortion and the importance of doing the morally right thing by the child she carries. I would tell her of God's forgiveness for past sins and his promise to provide help and strength for future burdens. If she is willing to thus honor God, I would see that she receives the needed help to carry through on her righteous decision. Both of us could live with that decision without guilt. (Documentation for the above is from **A Handbook on Abortion**, by Dr. J.C. Willke, M.D., Hayes Pub. Co.)

## QUESTIONS ANSWERED

# Editorial Glimmerings

Steve Williams, who preaches for the church in Roan Mountain, Tennessee, submitted the following observations and questions:

"Mark 6:17, 18. Facts gleaned from these verses:

"(1) Herod had married Herodias.

"(2) Herodias was Philip's wife.

"(3) It wasn't lawful for Herod to have her.

"Explain:

"(1) The idea of marriage as used here.

"(2) How can a woman be married to one man and be the wife of another? To whom does she belong?

"(3) If it wasn't **lawful** for Herod to have her:

"(a) **According to whom and by what law** wasn't it lawful for Herod to have her?

"(b) To whom did she belong, rightfully?

"(c) What was John requesting Herod to do?

"(d) How can he keep her?"

Since the answer to some of these questions are rather involved, we think the best way to reply to them is to set out some Scriptural principles that may be applied to each one in particular and to the whole situation in general. For those who wish to have more of the background to the ques-

tions, study Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:16-29; Luke 3:19, 20. The principles which need to be considered in the study of these passages, and in reply to our questions, are as follows:

1. Herod and Herodias lived under the law of Moses (or at least this is the law John had reference to), which permitted divorce and remarriage (at least in some cases) without sin (Deut. 24:1-4), and not under the New Covenant of Christ, which prohibits divorce and remarriage, except on the grounds of adultery. There were two schools of thoughts among the Jews as to the meaning of Deuteronomy 24:1, 2. The sterner school, led by Shammai, said that Moses meant that the only grounds of divorce and remarriage was unchastity (adultery). The more liberal school, headed by Hillel, said that Moses permitted divorce and remarriage for any cause. We have no desire here to enter into the controversy between these two schools of Jewish thought, but it seems to us that unless Jesus conceded the correctness of Hillel's school of thought that He Himself said precisely the same thing as the law of Moses (Matt. 19:3-9). But if He said precisely the same thing as was taught in the law of Moses, then His statement reverting back to God's

original law in contrast with the law of Moses is both pointless and meaningless. Thus it seems to us that the implication is strong that He conceded the correctness of the "any cause" school. We conclude therefore that Moses had granted the right to divorce and remarry, which was something different than God's original law, which called for one man married to one woman for life, the law to which Jesus reverted for the New Testament system. Herod and Herodias lived under the law of Moses, not under the new law of Christ, under the old law, not under the New Testament. It is therefore an error to try to make them subject to New Testament teaching pertaining to divorce and remarriage. Jesus' words are bound today but they were not bound at the time John confronted Herod and Herodias.

2. The law of Moses served both as the civil law, regulating their civil activities, and the spiritual law, regulating their service to God. It was thus two laws in one. The New Testament serves only as the spiritual law. God has left the civil aspect to civil government (Rom. 13). This fact is often overlooked (and sometimes we wonder if it is not purposely so when it seems to strengthen an argument) by those of us living under the New Testament. One might now meet the requirements of the civil law (as is often done in divorce and remarriage) but not the demands of the spiritual law, that which is revealed as the will of God in the gospel of Christ. The terms of both laws must be met before God approves divorce and remarriage now. But under the Old Testament, both laws were in one. To meet the demands of one was to meet the demands of both; to fail to meet the demands of one was to fail to meet the demands of the other.

3. Words are often used in more than one sense. One should always keep in mind the fact that the context in which a word is used determines, in the final analysis, the meaning of a word. Much harm has been done in trying to force a word to mean the same thing everywhere and at all times. Obviously, when it is said that Herodias was at the same time married to Herod and the wife of Philip that "married" means something

other than a legal marriage. They were married in some sense but the inspired writers did not recognize it as a legal marriage. In short, they were ignoring the law in their relationship. Had we been writing this statement in modern English, most of us would have said, "For Herod had 'married' her," enclosing the word "married" in quotation marks to indicate that it was being used in a sense other than the usually accepted one. While they were undoubtedly married in some sense, the Biblical writers did not recognize it as a lawful arrangement — it did not meet the demands of the law (which, we must remember, was both civil and religious).

4. While divorce and remarriage were permitted under the law (and that without sin), there were some legal restriction as to whom one could marry when he was put away. For example, the very law which permitted the man to put away his wife prohibited him from ever marrying her again after she had married another man (Deut. 24:1-4). Or, in other words, once she was put away, she was free to marry again (even to her former husband, we suppose), but when she married another man and if he put her away she could not then marry her first husband ever again. After a second marriage there was no lawful way she could go back to the first. Of course she would be free to remarry a third party, if the second husband put her away, but not to her first husband. And had she married him again, the marriage would not have been legal. Another restriction under the law (and the one that bears directly upon our questions) was that one could not take his brother's wife while his brother lived (Lev. 18:16; 20:21). We say "while he lived" because if he were dead a living brother could be under obligation to take her and rear children in his dead brother's name (Deut. 25:5-10). Herod and Herodias were living in open violation to this law. Thus one could not marry a living brother's wife (or former wife), even if she had been divorced.

5. To be Scriptural a marriage must be lawful (legal) — that is, it must comply with the requirements of civil law. When a marriage is in violation of civil laws, it cannot be a legal marriage. This is so obvious that

it would be superfluous to argue it.

With these five Scriptural principles before us, the questions are practically answered.

(1) Explain: the idea of marriage as used here. It was a marriage in some sense but it was not a legal marriage. As long as Philip lived, there was no way Herod could have lawfully married Herodias (see principles 2, 3, and 4 above).

(2) Explain: how can a woman be married to one man and be the wife of another? She is legally the wife of Philip; she is illegally married to Herod. To whom does she belong? To Philip, legally.

(3) If it wasn't lawful for Herod to have her:

(a) According to whom and by which law wasn't it lawful for Herod to have her? According to Moses and the law given by him in Lev. 18:16; 20:21.

(b) To whom did she belong, rightfully?

To Philip (unless the law of Deut. 24:3, 4 applied, in which case she would belong to no one; but since she could not legally marry Herod, we assume that, as far as the law of Deut. 24:3, 4 is concerned, she would still be the wife of Philip — that the marriage to Herod would, in the eyes of the law, not be considered a marriage at all).

(c) What was John requesting Herod to do? To cease living with his brother's wife.

(d) How can he keep her? He cannot legitimately. As long as Philip lived, he could never be legally married to her (that is as long as the law of Moses was in effect). She could, therefore, never be legally his (see principle 5 above). She would remain (as the inspired writers recognize) Philip's wife (and this implies that Philip had not divorced her, but even if he had, it was still unlawful for Herod to marry her, although she might have had a legal right to marry someone other than Philip's brother).

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## The Christian's Prayer Life (Part 2)

**Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC**

According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, in Christ we become a new creature. And, because Christ's perfect example of God's love constrains us, as 2 Corinthians 5:14 reveals, we Christians are motivated to never again live unto ourselves, but to live unto Christ who died for us and rose again. Therefore, even as Paul said by inspiration, in Galatians 5:6, the only faith which avails anything is "faith which worketh by love."

Man is responsible for loving or not loving in the covenant of fellowship with God. It is not automatic! It is "let us love one another, for God is love." It is not involuntary but voluntary action which "worketh by love" that we are responsible for, whether we be just a Christian or just a Christian who preaches the gospel.

Our faith in God then must be a daily voluntary action, which works by love, which seeks to know God, and by which each of us is responsible, either to know God or to not know God. In fact, I believe it is this daily voluntary action of respon-

sibility which will determine what any individual Christian's prayer life will be.

The wise and inspired Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 7:20, "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Not even the righteous or just are without sin, therefore every Christian needs to acknowledge honestly to self his feet of clay, his weaknesses, and his failures as mere fleshly creatures of God. As we examine self daily, we must be constantly engaged in the "weaning process" more independent of earthly things, and more dependent on Christ, our Lord. And also be more dedicated in our obedience of Christ's new commandment of John 13:34 and of John 15:12, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."

The weaning process, you see, is really a "growing in love process!" A growing in love process, even as Paul's petition, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end



He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." (1 Thess. 3:12, 13.)

Not only did Christ preach and teach love one for another, He practiced love one for another, and set the perfect pattern. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." Would to God that we not only hear and understand this truth, but that we also apply it to self! And, as we do so, remember Solomon's words, "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20), as we pray daily for the strength and ability to overcome our temptations to serve self rather than our Lord!

If we do not love one another, hereby we also know that His love is not perfected in us, because God dwelleth not in us. Since God is love, love is the most important attitude of the spirit of man, when we pray to God. There is absolutely nothing that will keep the heart of man open toward God, except love. Since "God is love" His heart is always open toward us! And, if we have godly sorrow for our shortcomings, we will **always** benefit! Our love for God, and His love for us, repels hinderances to prayer and repentance, that would keep us apart.

Like a lamp for all to see the light thereof, our covenant of fellowship with God needs to be constantly fed from God's love, goodness, and mercy! Our constant daily need for spiritual food, for God's love, goodness, and mercy, keeps drawing us together. Therefore, we cannot keep from praying and God cannot keep from blessing us according to His perfect and divine will, as only He knows our every need, before we know what it is.

Would to God, also, that we remember that intercessory prayer on behalf of others, is the logical outcome of self-less-ness! "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplica-

tions, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:1-4.) Even as Christ loved us, first of all love for others, results in first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks being made for all men. The faith in God that saves, is an active, visible, perfected faith which "works by love." However, the works of faith in God are not works of merit, since faith saves by grace. Obedient faith saves by God's grace. But not even a Christian preacher can live a perfect life, so what now? God's gospel of grace calls, not for perfection but for faithfulness! Jesus did not say to the man with five talents and the one who had two, "Well done thou good and **perfect** servant." He said, "Well done thou good and **faithful** servant." We cannot be perfect, but we can pray daily that our devotion and faithfulness to God, through our Lord, shall never waver, and then work our prayer to the very best of our ability — daily!

It will soon be thirty-four years since I learned the truth and obeyed the gospel of Christ, and many have been the times when I have grieved my Lord because of my frailties of clay, but each day, thanks be to God, I can acknowledge my sins and shortcomings and appeal and plead that the blood of Christ continue to cleanse me. Jesus Christ, the Righteous, is our Advocate with the Father, and the propitiation for not only our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.

The grace of God not only saves, however, for His grace also sends one forth to serve others in order to serve Him acceptably. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. 12:28.) The appreciation of God's grace, sends one out like his Lord to serve others in love, even as He loved us! Let us have grace!

Also, "According as each hath received a

gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Pet. 4:10 ASV.) Specifically, in this context, "spiritual gifts," but certainly in general application of the principle, what ever ability or talents God has given, all of it is to be freely used for others. To be used, not as our own, but as God's, being good stewards of the manifold grace of God. God has not given all of us the same abilities or talents, but God never short changed any man regarding the "human ability to love!" God is love and He has made man in His own image, with the human ability to love. Therefore, as good stewards of the grace of God, even the one talent man can "love one another" even as Jesus, our Saviour, loved us, according to our several abilities.

Yes, faith in God which works by love, "availeth much." (Gal. 5:6.) Acquiring the knowledge of the grace of God as a new creature in Christ Jesus, "availeth much." (Gal. 6:15.) And, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much." (James 5:16.) In conclusion therefore, I believe that the Christian's prayer life will, of necessity, be rich, fulfilling, and blessed by God, in direct proportion to the extent has, not only acquired, understood, and retained the inspired revealed word of God, but also how honestly he or she has applied God's word to self! How honestly one has applied to self the words of 1 John 1:7-9: First, "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Second, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And third, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I believe that a Christian's prayer life will be blessed by God in direct proportion, not only how honestly we have applied to "self" (1 John 1:7-9), but also how we have applied God's grace or favor for others, which is in and through Jesus Christ, to our daily lives, so that the admonition of Hebrews 12:28 becomes our daily way of life: Let us have grace or favor for others whereby we may "serve God acceptably

with reverence and godly fear."

Then also, and perhaps, most important, I believe the Christian's prayer life will be rich, fulfilling and blessed by God, in direct proportion to how honestly he has applied to self the faith in God which works by love, even as Jesus Christ hath shown, perfectly, God's love for all men. Would to God that we daily work and serve and pray for others, as the following poem by an unknown author suggests.

*Lord, help me to love from day to day,  
In such a self-forgetful way.  
That even when I kneel to pray,  
My prayer will be for others.  
Help me in all the work I do,  
To ever be sincere and true.  
And know that all I do for you,  
Must needs be done for others.  
And when my work on earth is done,  
And my new work in heaven's begun;  
May I forget the crown I've won,  
While thinking still of others.  
Others, Lord, yes others;  
Let this my motto be.  
Help me to live for others  
That I may live like Thee.*

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# The Preacher's Thesis

Jerry Gross, Doraville, GA

"Preacher, exactly what was it you were trying to say last Sunday morning?"

I doubt that any remark could be more depressing to a preacher who takes his preaching efforts seriously. Yet, I am convinced that the criticism implied in the above comment is widespread and well deserved. It cannot be doubted that most, if not all, that we have to say in a sermon is true, good, and important. The problem is that there is no coherence to all of it. The hearer cannot put his finger on the exact thrust of the sermon and, hence, is not sure what to do with it all.

It is evident that one of the best ways to avoid this problem is for the preacher to settle on a sermon thesis **before** he begins to develop his sermon outline. A sermon thesis is a one-sentence statement of the point that the preacher wants to make. If a preacher cannot summarize his sermon in one clearly worded statement, then he does not know what he is really trying to say and is not yet ready to deliver that sermon. Again, every word of his sermon may be true, but the effect of his words will be scattered rather than focused. Hence, the audience cannot respond appropriately to his message. Indeed, he cannot be sure himself what he wants his hearers to do. However, if a preacher can settle at the outset of his lesson what one specific point he intends to convince his audience of, then he can organize his thoughts around that point and can thereby marshal his evidence in a persuasive manner.

The sermon thesis corresponds to the conclusion of a logical argument. In every argument there are three crucial elements, two of which are readily apparent. The two apparent elements are the conclusion and the evidence that supports that conclusion. The invisible element is the mental operation that we call on inference, whereby one thinks, "This (e.g., the conclusion) is so because that (the evidence) is so." To be effective a sermon need not be logically formal or stilted, but it should be structured so

that the audience knows what point it is expected to believe and thus can concentrate on honestly making the inference hoped for by the speaker. Regardless of the kind of sermon being prepared (evangelistic, doctrinal, devotional, etc.), every sermon should have a thesis. Without it, a sermon will leave the audience ultimately undirected, albeit momentarily uplifted.

The following suggestions for a good thesis may appear to be somewhat arbitrary but I have found them to be excellent guidelines.

1. Avoid beginning a thesis with the word "to." One usually ends up with a sermon **aim** or **purpose** rather than a thesis (e.g., "to convince my hearers of the importance of baptism." This is an aim, not a thesis.)

2. Make the thesis brief (8-15 words) and uncompounded.

3. The thesis should be fresh and thought provoking (note the effect of a proverb).

4. It should be arguable. (Why preach that which no one disputes? In times like these there is much persuading, convicting, and changing of minds that need to be done. If you do not have to work to defend your thesis, your audience may think it trite and unessential to the struggles they are really facing.)

Although the following are not perfect examples, they are somewhat helpful in illustrating the above remarks:

"Every Christian should strive to live so that the truth does not suffer in his hands." (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15.)

"The place to stop adultery is in the heart." (cf. Matt. 5:28.)

"In our haste to forgive, we often opt for false forgiveness."

"A constant struggle in Christian growth is that of avoiding the pull of the average."

In view of the seriousness of our message, we ought to make every effort to simplify the listening process for our hearers. One good way to begin simplifying that process is to have well in hand, before we prepare our sermons, a concisely stated sermon thesis.



# The Glory Of The Cross

**Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC**

The "old, rugged cross" has long been recognized as the symbol of New Testament Christianity. This is as it ought to be because the cross was the central theme of apostolic preaching. Consider the sermon Peter delivered as he used the keys of the kingdom of heaven to unlock the way of salvation. Following his remarks explaining the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the speaking in tongues, Peter launched into his sermon. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. . . ." (Acts 2:22, 23.) Then, after setting forth evidence for the fact that Jesus was the promised Messiah, Peter concluded forcefully: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:37.) Of his preaching Paul offered the classic apology: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:1, 2.)

The cross is a great paradox. This fact is reflected by the responses to the gospel story described by Paul. To the Corinthians Paul suggested: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:18, 23.) It is understanding this paradox that enables us to "glory . . . in the cross of Christ."

How is it that the cross once a symbol of wickedness and moral decadence (death by

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crucifixion was reserved for the most vile and degenerate criminals) has come to be the symbol of all that is good and morally upright? The answer lies in the fact that the cross is not the end of the story! Listen to Paul: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) Christ not only died on the cross, but He rose from the dead! The cross is not the end. The cross did not conquer.

Had Jesus been left in the tomb there could have been no gospel. There would be no hope of life in His name. The disciples would have disbanded. Satan would have been victorious. It is the resurrection of Jesus that gives life and vitality to the message of the cross. And by that resurrection He is "declared to be the Son of God with power!" (Rom. 1:4.) Thanks be to God, "He is risen!"

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## ABROAD:

**Santiago, Chile:** A recent two-week campaign in Santiago was a resounding success. The campaign was conducted by Christians from the United States with Dan Coker doing the preaching in a gospel meeting that was a part of the campaign. Attendance during the meeting averaged about 400 with private studies being conducted after each service. One elderly gentleman believed the preaching with the result being that both he and his family (21 souls) were baptized. Household conversions do not appear to be a thing of the past! Brother Coker was also invited to speak to a group of evangelical preachers, who subsequently commended him for his courage to preach the Bible only. The result of this meeting was that the preachers committed themselves to preaching only the Christianity of the New Testament, leading to 98 more baptisms before the campaign was completed. (One of the campaign workers was Dennie Osborne, a student at Abilene Christian University from the Helen Street church in Fayetteville, N.C.)

**Torreón, Mexico:** Christians from more than two dozen churches in the United States took part in the Mexico Harvest Campaign in July. As these church leaders worked with Mexican Christians in conducting simultaneous campaigns in seventeen different cities, there were 173 baptisms that resulted. Other benefits of the campaign were the development of new methods of follow-up and new materials for future Mexican work.

**Pampa, Texas:** Ronnie Clayton reports that a campaign for Christ in India this summer led to 2,649 baptisms. Of that number 51 of the converts were denominational preachers. Other than the conversions, perhaps the brightest accomplishments of the campaign was the involvement of the native preachers. More than half of those baptized were taught by Indian preachers. The potential for New Testa-

ment Christianity in India is remarkable, as this most recent campaign reveals.

**Poland:** For months now the political and economic crisis in Poland has held the attention of the free world. Even though Poland is a Communist country, the seeds of Christianity have borne fruit and there are more than one thousand brothers and sisters living there. These Christians have not gone untouched by the current crisis. They too have suffered from the food and clothing shortages and the anxiety of political instability. In response to their need, Christians in Vienna, Austria, are now organizing an effort to take food into Poland. The church in Vienna has access to one of the largest wholesale grocery stores in Austria and has bought food in bulk amounts. The food will be distributed by faithful Christians in fourteen major Polish cities. The churches in America also have an opportunity to help alleviate the need of our brethren in Poland. The Airline Drive congregation in Bossier City, LA, is now receiving money with which food will be purchased. Any churches wishing to help may write to: Airline church of Christ, 2125 Airline Drive, Bossier City, LA 71111.

## AT HOME:

**Joelton, Tennessee:** The Joelton church, sponsors of the Clean-Up TV Campaign, has called for an end of the current boycott of General Foods and American Home Products. According to the August newsletter of the "Clean Up TV" Campaign, "Even our most vicious opponents are now grudgingly admitting that the Campaign and the resulting parallel programs by hundreds of other groups which it generated, are having a tremendous impact on the television industry. Even General Foods and American Home Products have made such significant improvements that we feel the boycott can now be completed." This assessment of the impact on the Campaign and similar efforts is substantiated by a

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statement in the June 15, 1981, issue of *Newsweek*, "ABC Vice President Alfred Schneider recently reported that the number of advertisers pulling out of his network's more risqué series has been 'increas-

ing at an alarming rate.' " The Joelton church reports that it will continue to monitor the new fall schedule very carefully in order to see if the promised changes are forthcoming.

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## THINKING THINGS THROUGH

# The Church At Work

The church of our blessed Lord is a teaching institution. Teaching is her mission — her primary work. Jesus said to His apostles, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28:19.) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47.) "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8.) As the commission should indicate, the church in and of itself cannot teach. She must depend on her members to carry out her work. When they teach (or work) the church is teaching (or working); when they fail to teach, the church of necessity fails in her mission. No church can do more than is done by her members, acting either individually or collectively. The work of the church must ultimately be done by Christians. There is no other way.

But how do we, as members of the body of Christ, teach? There are numerous ways but perhaps the following are the best known and most effective:

1. **We teach by example.** This is simply to say that we show the world what we believe by how we live. Our words (in teaching) are vital, but what we say may be distorted or completely hidden by what we do. When our language profanes the name of God, when our dress suggests sexual lust, when our work is destructive to morals, when our entertainment is worldly, and when our actions are questionable, our example is the exact opposite of what it should be. The September 1981

world will be so carried away with what we do that they are unlikely to hear what we say. But when our speech is reverent, our apparel modest, our work constructive, our recreation wholesome, and our actions above question, we will be teaching the truth in a powerful way — we will be teaching the right things by example.

Most people we are called upon to deal with will agree with the sentiments expressed in the following poem:

*I'd rather see a sermon  
Than to hear one any day;  
I'd rather one would walk with me  
Than merely show the way.*

*The eye's a better pupil  
And more willing than the ear;  
Fine counsel is confusing,  
But example is always clear.*

*And the best of all the preachers  
Are the men who live their creeds,  
For to see the good in action  
Is what everybody needs.*

*I can soon learn how to do it  
If you'll let me see it done.  
I can watch your hands in action  
But your tongue too fast may run.*

*And the lectures you deliver  
May be very fine and true,  
But I'd rather get my lesson  
By observing what you do.*

*For I may misunderstand you  
And the high advice you give,  
But there is no misunderstanding  
How you act and how you live.*

There is no one who cannot teach by example — in fact, there is no one who is not teaching by example.

2. **We teach by public worship.** The primary purpose of worship is to praise and



adore God, but as we praise and adore God, the very act itself is a cooperate declaration of our faith. Take for example the Lord's supper. It was designed for a memorial of the death of our crucified Lord. But each time we so remember the Lord's death we are declaring it afresh to the world. Paul said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26.) Thus each Lord's day when we meet together to break bread we are proclaiming to the world and to ourselves that Jesus died for our sins. Every week we are reminded anew that our salvation depends upon His death, to His sacrifice upon the cross.

Viewed in this light, each Christian should eagerly await each opportunity to assemble with the saints. To neglect or miss the weekly communion (or any other act of divine worship) is no trifling matter. To miss the Lord's supper is to miss a golden opportunity to proclaim the central fact of the Christian system.

**3. We teach by word of mouth.** By this we mean the whole concept of what we ordinarily call teaching. This includes the

pulpit, the class room, home studies, group discussions (at work and play), radio, television, newspapers, tracts, books, etc. Paul instructed Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:2.) The principle herein set forth would apply to the "faithful men" as well as to Timothy . . . and to "faithful men" today as well as then.

Whether we teach by example, by public worship, or by word of mouth, wherever we go we are to go teaching, teaching the saving truth of the gospel of Christ. We are told that the Greek construction of the Great Commission according to Matthew is such as to suggest "As you go, teach or make disciples" rather than the imperative "Go teach or make disciples." The charge is not only to go (the imperative is brought out elsewhere in the Scriptures by both command, Mark 16:15, and example, Acts 8:4) but as we go, teach. Thus as we go we are to go teaching. This is the primary work of the church — it is the church working through her members.



## Suicide

**Max Patterson, Henderson, Tn.**

Would you be shocked to know that there is an active campaign in this country to dignify and give man the right to suicide? The humanists have been pushing the right to suicide for some time. In Humanists Manifestos I and II, the following quotation is taken:

"To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of civil liberties in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition to governmental policies, fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide."

Suicide isn't anything new. In fact, two of the better known stories in the Old and New Testaments are Saul, who fell on his

own sword rather than be taken in battle (1 Samuel 31:4); and Judas, who betrayed Jesus and afterward "went and hanged himself." (Matt. 27:5.)

Suicide is the number two cause of death among college students, second only to traffic fatalities. In fact, on some university campuses tall buildings are tightly secured to protect against suicide. Suicide, increasing among teenagers, is the third leading cause of death among this group. In ten years it has risen by 100 percent. Attempted suicides reported is three times the number it was 20 years ago. Some have estimated that 57 American children attempt suicide every hour!

There are two things about the above that are especially disturbing. One is the rapid rise in suicide. The other is that suicide is being treated as a legitimate option to life.

Probably the main factor in the rapid rise of suicide is that life has lost meaning. For

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these, the courage to continue can come from realizing that many people care, God cares, and there are things to be done, important things.

For those who teach suicide as a righteous option to living and solving problems will need to realize several things: one, suicide does not solve problems. It creates greater ones, for the people who are left, and for that soul when he meets God. Two, suicide is murder. It is neither right to murder others or oneself. Three, every suicide in the Bible is, in the final analysis, the direct result of refusing to let God rule their lives. In those cases, two of which have been fairly recent, where I have dealt with potential suicides, it was quite clear that the problem situation resulted from

not following the Lord's way. Paul, and Jesus, were willing to die, but did not want to die. The early Christians never invited death, but accepted it rather than deny the faith. Dying is not a tragedy, but dying for the wrong reason is.

Although it is appointed unto man to die, as long as breath is in us, we can glorify God, live right, and be a blessing to others (Heb. 9:27; Phil. 1:21-24). Therefore, Christians must oppose the humanists. We must give people the courage and reason to live, not take it away.

We must let people know that they could have such a useful life if they would only tell others of the one who came to give life and to give it more abundantly (John 10:10).

# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC  
NORTH CAROLINA

**Winston-Salem.** South Fork church will operate a booth at the Dixie Classic Fair, October 2-10.

**Woodleaf.** Eugene Pitts who had recently begun preaching for the Corinth congregation died August 9.

**Jacksonville.** Robert Goff has accepted an invitation to work with the Jacksonville congregation.

**Mocksville.** Don Freeman has moved to Texas. North Main is now looking for a good man to take his place.

**Elizabeth City.** Glenn D. Martin has announced his resignation and retirement effective December 31. The Martins plan,

however, to stay there and to continue to assist with the work.

**Greenville.** Carl Etchison of Bloomington, Indiana, has accepted the position of campus evangelist to work on the campus of Eastern Carolina University.

**Siler City.** Roger Jones has resigned as minister effective October 31.

**Wilkesboro.** "A milestone has been reached by the congregation in Wilkesboro. We have become self-supporting."

**Fayetteville.** Terry Graves has joined the staff at Helen Street as a personal work minister. He is a recent graduate of East Tennessee School of Preaching.

## N.C. Baptisms

Providence Road, Charlotte, 2; Hickory, 1; Salisbury, 1; Helen St., Fayetteville, 2;

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### North Carolina

Helen Street, Fayetteville . . . . . September 27-October 2  
Salisbury, Wayland McClellan . . . . . October 4-9

### South Carolina

Duncan, B.G. Langston . . . . . October 4-9  
Essex Village, Charleston, Robert Brown . . . . . October 11-14  
Essex Village, Charleston, Family Enrichment, Gayle Napier . . . . . October 16-18  
Gaffney, David Pharr . . . . . October 18-23

Gastonia, 1; Wilkesboro, 4; Raleigh, 9; Westside, Charlotte, 1; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 1; Burlington, 2. Total: 24.

## **West Jefferson**

HOWARD WINTERS, Reporting: The first ten days of July an extraordinary campaign was conducted by the church here. Twelve workers (mostly student preachers) from West Monroe, LA, spent their time in door knocking and study with prospects. J.C. Oser, a deacon at the White's Ferry Road church, did the preaching. The local people had been preparing for this event for several months, and when the time arrived they were ready to go . . . and to grow. Six were baptized and three restored. This left the church approximately 25 percent stronger (numerically) than before the campaign. But much progress was made in other areas as well, not the least of which was the fact that one of the workers decided to move his family to West Jefferson to help in the follow-up work, training programs, and with the young people. All in all, this was by far the most successful effort I have ever been associated with. The church had developed a mind to work, the workers came to work, and working together they set the church ahead by many years of ordinary growth and activity.

## **Washington**

PAUL J. DITORO, Reporting: We are

pleased to report that we had a baptism July 29th.

The work here is filled with opportunity. The Bible Correspondence Course enrollment continues to grow. We have many prospects for Bible studies as a result of these B.C.C.'s.

This is the first baptism here in Washington since I've been here (that's since last October), and it has been quite some time since there was a previous baptism; therefore I am elated to be able to report this new birth.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Myrtle Beach.** Buford Carroll reports an average attendance of 482 during July and August. Contributions are up also. On August 2 they were \$800.00 above the weekly budget. "The Lord has been good to us."

**Greenwood.** Hosie Byrd has completed his studies at the Southeastern Biblical Institute and is now working in the Greenwood area.

**Allendale.** Seventeen workers from Essex Village in Charleston and from Sparta, Tennessee, worked door-to-door to advertise their gospel meeting. Sid Fulford was the speaker.

**Williston.** Steve Gibson is the new preacher at Williston. He is a 1981 graduate of Freed-Hardeman College. The church publishes a weekly newspaper column in the

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local paper and has a 5-minute radio program on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. In a recent meeting two men were baptized. Arlin Chapman was the speaker.

**Laurens.** There were seven baptisms during the recent campaign in which Harold Jones preached. Immediately after two more were added. They also report the addition of four families who have moved into

the area.

**Seneca.** The new preacher is Larry D. Mathis.

### **S.C. Baptisms**

Myrtle Beach, 5; Duncan, 1; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; Florence, 2; Buford St., Gaffney, 4; Williston, 2; Laurens, 9; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 2. Total: 26.

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## *A Look At Books*

### **Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC**

**What the Bible Says About Women,** Julia Staton, College Press Publishing Company; Joplin, Missouri, 1980; 412 pages, cloth \$13.50.

This is a massive work. The author has researched the subject thoroughly. For the most part it is excellent. However, we hesitate to recommend it because of some of the implications the author draws.

For instance, she observes:

"Many feel that men are the only ones who should be making the speeches, teaching, and leading out in the community and the church.

"There is no indication that God has ever held these archaic traditions. Even from the very beginning of the Israelite nation, women were leading out, making speeches, and influencing greatly the communities in which they lived. Some restrictions that have been placed upon women throughout history (except for moral restrictions) have come from the minds of sinful men, not from the mind of God."

Mrs. Staton goes on to say that God's message to women regarding the work they may do is "Do whatever you can with whatever you have to make your community and church more Christ-like — always, remembering your responsibilities to your husband and children."

While she never directly says it, the implication is clear: women preachers are prohibited by restrictions imposed by "sinful men" and not by God.

Another problem area is the chapter on "Becoming God's Women." Here a rather detailed account is given concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is argued that September 1981

the Spirit personally indwells each Christian beginning at his baptism. It is further argued that the Spirit works directly — independent of the Word — on behalf of the Christian.

While there is much good in the book and we think mature, knowledgeable Bible students (both men and women) may profit from it, there are enough problem areas that we cannot recommend it for general reading.

**Happiness: Is it the Impossible Dream?**, Richard E. Stevens; Impact Publications, P.O. Box 455, Muncie, In. 47305; 178 pages, paper \$1.75 in quantities of 5 or more.

This is an interesting study of the Beatitudes. The author has done an excellent job in making application of those eternal principles to our world today. He rightly points out that happiness is not the impossible dream, but it is not going to be found in the way most folks are searching for it, either. Happiness is the result of losing oneself in service to God and man. Incorporating the principles taught in the Beatitudes will help one live a happy life. This book is designed for non-Christians who are struggling for meaning in life. It is intended to be a door-opener so that further study can be arranged. We think it is an excellent book for this type work. We also see it as an excellent book for all Christians to read. We commend it highly.



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**(See pages 8 & 9)**



# EDITORIAL

## WHY NOT?

It is strange but true: men often (even in the Lord's church at times and on certain subjects) will not let God say what He has already said. They hatch out some human theory and then they have to change God's word to fit it. To let God say what He has said would completely annihilate the theory. Thus to save their theory they have to change God's word — they have to suppress the Scriptures and state the doctrine in the words they think God should have said. A case in point is the following, taken from **Seven Simple Sermons on the Saviour's Last Words**, by Herschel Ford:

"You can imagine the scene [on Pentecost]. When Peter had ended his sermon a man rushed up and cried out, 'I clamored for His death — I spat on Him as He passed by. Is there any hope for me?' And Peter says, 'Repent and believe and you will be saved.' Another says, 'I pressed the crown of thorns upon His brow. Is there any hope for me?' Another says, 'I slapped His face. Is there any hope for me?' Another says, 'I pulled out His beard. Is there any hope for me?' Another says, 'I drove the nails through His hands and feet. Is there any hope for me?' Another says, 'I lifted up the Cross. Is there any hope for me?' Another says, 'I thrust the spear into His side. Is there any hope for me?' And I can hear Peter saying to each of them, 'Repent of your sins. Put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will surely be saved.'"

Now it just so happened that men did cry out on that day, after Peter had told them they were guilty of crucifying the Son of God — that His innocent blood was upon their hands. "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37.) Peter answered them clearly and concisely, in a manner which simply could not be misunderstood by any responsible person: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38.) Mr. Ford put two answers in Peter's mouth, each differing radically from what Peter actually said, but he never did let Peter speak for himself — he never did quote the words given by Peter under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Why not? Why not let God speak for Himself? The Bible says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.)

The fact is, Mr. Ford has a theory about how men are saved, a theory which is in direct conflict with the words of Peter, which would have been absolutely destroyed by the exact words of inspiration. Thus to save his theory Mr. Ford put words in the mouth of Peter which he did not say and completely suppressed the words he did say. He therefore changed the words of Peter to save his theory.

We ask Mr. Ford (and all others who tamper with the words of the Bible in order to save their human theories): Why not let God say what He said? Do we think we can change the truth by changing the word of God? Paul raised this question himself by asking, "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" He answers, "God forbid:

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## EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.” (Rom. 3:3, 4.)

## GIVING AND PROVIDENCE

Most of us believe in providence but in such a vague way that it is almost meaningless to us for any practical purpose. But not for all. When we lived and worked with the church in Burlington, we experienced such rapid growth that we found our building inadequate to meet our expanding needs and the property upon which it was built too small for expansion. We soon found ourselves in a situation of nowhere to put the people when they came to worship . . . and still they kept coming. Every classroom was filled to absolute capacity. The leaders of the church were forced to make a decision to buy more property and then start a building program. But we were financially embarrassed. Every penny of our income had been budgeted for current work. One day we were discussing the magnitude of our building program (the cost compared with the current contribution level) with one of the members, a business man who had come out of denominationalism and was burning with zeal for the truth, and pointed out to him that the total contribution (none of which had been budgeted for expansion) was not half enough to make payments on the kind of building we needed. Upon hearing this he made a remark that greatly impressed us then and has been a part of our thinking ever since.

In facing the fact that our contribution was not nearly enough to make payments on the kind of building we needed, he said, “I believe this is the Lord’s will and if it is and we go ahead with the work He will provide the necessary means . . . even if He has to prosper me enough to do it myself.” That is, in our judgment, a strong expression of faith in the providence of God. If it is true that God will prosper someone in order to do His work, then could that someone be me? If God did prosper me, could he count on me to faithfully help build a strong church financially?

If God prospered me in order to do His work in my community, would I give more or would I selfishly use it on more worldly things? Do we really believe that God will

help us do what He commanded us to do? If so, what are we waiting on to “go into all the world with the gospel?” Can we truthfully pray, “Lord, build up thy cause financially, even if it means using me to do so?”

Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35.) It has long been our firm conviction that when a man sets his heart and mind to do the will of God, and if to do His will requires more than our present means are capable of doing, that He will supply him with the necessary means. Is not this precisely what Paul is teaching in the following verse? “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” (2 Cor. 9:8.) To emphasize the vital message of this verse, notice the four **alls** used by Paul: God makes **all** grace abound that we may **always** have **all** sufficiency in **all** things, and **all** this to the end that we may abound in every good work.

## WE CANNOT FOOL GOD

Abraham Lincoln made a very incisive statement when he said, “We can fool all the people part of the time, and part of the people all of the time, but we cannot fool all the people all of the time.” This displays a profound insight into human psychology, but it fails to go as far as it should go. Adding the most vital concept, the expanded statement would be: We can fool all the people part of the time, and part of the people all of the time, but we cannot fool all the people all of the time and we cannot fool God **any** of the time. Most people would give lip service to this sentiment but at the same time keep right on trying to fool God anyway. But it cannot be done. “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Heb. 4:13.)

## CHRISTIANITY

It is our conception that New Testament Christianity (and in the final analysis there is no other kind) is the most beautiful, the most meaningful, and the most needed thing in the world. God planned it (Eph. 3:10, 11); Jesus died to make it possible

(Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7); the gospel reveals it (Rom. 1:17); the early church proclaimed it (Acts 8:4); it is the grand and divine heritage of all who are willing to accept it (Matt. 11:28-30); and we have heartily embraced it. There are many facets of Christianity, none of which sound out its entire beauty or its profound nature, but some of its vitality and fundamental aspects can be seen in four words: loving, obeying, living, and sharing, which reveal some of its essential concepts.

1. **Loving.** The New Testament word for this is **agape**. It is not a passionate or emotional or even a natural love, but the kind of love the Lord commands and the kind that is controlled by the will — it is a willed

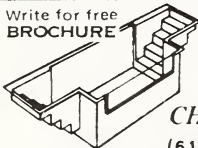
love! Love in this sense is a choice. It is a deep abiding concern for the welfare of all others, regardless of one's passionate, emotional, or natural feeling toward them. Such love knows no bounds. It does not stop at family or friends or acquaintances. Its object is considered priceless. It is a love that loves even when all feelings, passions, or emotions are seemingly against it (1 Cor. 13). Such love is the essence of Christianity.

2. **Obeying.** While many erroneously conclude that obedience if bound would reduce the religion of Christ to a stern, cold, emotionless, legalistic system, they completely miss the meaning of the **Lordship** of Jesus and the **servanthood** of Christians. To be a Christian is to accept Christ as Savior and follow Him as Lord. And for those who love the Lord and have made Him the ruler of their lives, obedience is a delightful and joyful experience (cf. John 14:15, 23, 24). There is therefore no way to separate obedience from the essential nature of Christianity.

3. **Living.** Christians follow Christ as their example (1 Pet. 2:21). This means that each Christian must live constructively. He must always do that which is right. He must go about doing good (Acts 10:38). His work, his play, his speech, his apparel must be such as to contribute to the moral upbuilding of both the kingdom of heaven and the society in which he lives. A Christian is not free to engage in anything that is morally destructive. Christianity is living pure, holy, godly, and righteously (Titus 2:11, 12).

4. **Sharing.** Christianity is the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:46). We have found it, and it is too good to keep for ourselves alone. We must therefore share it with the whole world. All men (who are not already under the blood of Christ) are lost in sin. They are doomed to a life of misery here and eternal destruction in the hereafter. They need to know how to escape the wrath to come. In the gospel of Christ we have the saving truth. How can we selfishly hold it back from them and still claim to love life, to love the lost, to love the truth, and to love the Lord? Thus the very nature of Christianity requires us to share its saving message.

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# Why Don't Preachers Visit More?

**Larry Eppley, Rockingham, N.C.**

"And hello, sister Smith. How are you feeling today? This is Wednesday, my appointed day for visitation of the shut-in and the hospitalized. Now let me see. Yes, I have now checked off your name so that I can inform the elders of my visit, should they decide to check up on me. And I wish I could stay longer, but you see, I have this list. So I'll plan to see you on my next visitation day. But before I go, shall we pray?"

Our beloved sister Smith has just received a visit from the official conveyor of glad tidings to the sick room. While most of the religious world would label this as a "pastoral call," we prefer to call this "a visit from the minister." If some type of visit does **not** materialize, the neglected member will ask, "Where is the preacher? Why don't preachers visit more? I thought that's what they were hired for."

In spite of the misconceptions implied by our exaggerated introduction, our topic is valid. Why don't preachers visit more?

## **Visitation Unimportant?**

To suggest that visitation is unimportant is to be accused of blasphemy. Or heresy. Or both. Our minds are so conditioned by the practices of those around us, that few of us have ever evaluated the proper relationship between the preacher and visiting. Many an eldership has declared to many a prospective preacher, "We expect our preacher to spend time in visiting." Some elderships have prepared written job descriptions, "so no preacher will come here thinking that he's just suppose to preach." However, such tactics will hardly correct a deficiency. And besides, visiting may not be the work of the preacher, per se. But that's not why preachers don't visit more.

## **A Deeper Problem**

Could it be that we have actually touched upon one of the greatest deficiencies in the church today? Are not many congregations merely collections of strangers who maintain only the most superficial of relation-

ships? Add to this our brand of itinerant preachers (men who are afraid to anticipate more than a few years tenure) and you have produced even more fragile relationships. It is an observable tragedy that some preachers have very few friends. Little wonder then that their books often offer greater comradeship than the flesh and blood folks within the congregation.

What struck you most about the opening words of this article? I trust that it was the coldness of the duty-bound minister as he went efficiently along performing his visitation ritual. Coldness! I shudder to think that I might ever receive a visit from some strange hireling who was bribed to come my way. Pulpit and pew alike had better rethink the oft stated view that "it's the preacher's place to visit; that's what he's paid for."

## **A Better Way**

The superior alternative is not mine. It was the apostle Paul who advised Timothy to esteem the older man as a father, the younger man as a brother, the older woman as a mother, and the younger woman as a sister. (1 Tim. 5:1, 2.) The same inspired apostle who charged his younger associate to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:1) also implied a responsibility for developing good relationships between himself and others of the congregation which he served. And what about Paul's tearful farewell statement to the Ephesians, "You yourselves know, from the first day . . . how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:18-20.)

Obviously when such relationships exist, a Christian (preacher or not) will rally to the side of anyone who needs him. One will not wait until imposed upon, to visit a friend and brother.

But how are these relationships developed? Slowly. We are considering whether a particular Christian (who just happens to also function as the pulpiter) is willing to invest much of his life in the upbuilding of another.

Jesus explained, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13, NASB.) The fact that Jesus was literally going to the cross often obscures another important truth. Jesus could lay down his life in death only after he had laid down his life "in life." Jesus' sincere love and deep concern for the disciples made an awesome impression upon men such as John. There was a mutual acceptance between this Teacher and his disciples. "Having loved them, he loved them to the end." (John 15:1.)

No wonder that the popular conception of "the preacher's visitation duty" is unhealthy. For apparently, we have missed the emphasis upon quality relationships with which Jesus' teaching abounds. We do not "elevate" one to a level of nonpersonhood when he or she becomes a Bible class teacher. Nor do we expect that teacher to suddenly start developing relationships "as part of the job." We assume, however, that this servant has already matured spiritually, and has a genuine love for others.

Why can it not be the same with the preacher? Why can't his personal visits be a natural outgrowth of his walk with Jesus? And why should members of a given congregation burden themselves over the number of visits that a particular preacher is or is not making?

### **The Preacher as a Friend**

There is nothing more encouraging to a preacher than for one with whom he worships to demonstrate a real loving concern. For this is God's servant who can easily be made to feel inadequate because he cannot possibly fill the "preacher role," which he or others have invented. But how seldom do many Christians view the preacher in all his dimensions, recognize emotional needs, and then reach out in love to a friend. (In many cases, a church never moves beyond arguing over his physical needs!) For example, try to recall the last time you introduced your preacher to someone, and think of the terminology which you used. Was he "a friend of mine?" Or was he just "the preacher?" Can you call him by his first name, or is he strictly "Brother

So-and-So." Now which would you rather come see you in some moment of difficulty or crisis — a concerned friend, or an uninvolved hireling?

It is true, of course, that not every preacher wants to make personal calls upon the membership. Many, rightly understanding that visitation is not their top priority, incorrectly assume that visitation is of little importance. They resent the popular adaptation of the pastor system which some would force upon them. They over-react. Viewing some element of their evangelistic work as all consuming, they justify their neglect as "choosing the more important task." They simply would rather prepare a sermon, write an article, or engage in personal Bible research than leave the cloistered realm of the study.

### **From Pulpit to Pew**

Ironically, such a practice lessens pulpit effectiveness. Whenever I am in the pew (a privilege not often mine) I want to hear a flesh and blood human being share his understanding of the Christ he serves, and then apply this valuable truth to the daily struggle called the Christian life. I want a proclamation, not a performance. Sensitivity, as well as soundness. I believe that I have every right to a presentation which mirrors my Lord's emphasis upon the "real stuff of life." Warmed over platitudes often fail to convey the freshness of Jesus' gospel. In short, I want a man before me who is totally human and knows it. Whose dedication to the person of Jesus and His marvelous teachings is demonstrated daily. One who, like his Master, is willing to "dwell among us." I am ill served by the ivory tower scholar whose knowledge of Bible languages and Biblical theology is beyond dispute, but whose understanding of human needs is shallow.

It is worth noting that Moses spent much of his time "off the mountain," even as Jesus descended the majestic slopes of Zion in order to associate with "the publicans and sinners." These and other great leaders somehow avoided the status of the "good 'ol boy" who is undistinguishable from the world. Yet they were very much a part of the people they served.

Why do some preachers spend an inadequate time with the local membership? Often they are simply victims of a time-shortage. Yet it is still true that stronger relationships among individual Christians,

accompanied by a broader understanding of the work of the located preacher would correct many deficiencies. The uninvolved hiring need never call again!

# Moral Courage Comes First

**Steve Gibson, Williston, S.C.**

Life is an opportunity for personal growth and self-expression. To the Christian, it is man's one opportunity to decide whether he will love and serve God (2 Cor. 6:2, Heb. 9:27). Those who come to God through Christ become "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet. 1:4.) For them life is an opportunity to grow more and more like God (Matt. 5:48).

In describing the orderly stages of Christian growth, Peter first says, "add to your faith virtue." (2 Pet. 1:5.) The word virtue means "moral excellence" (NASB) or moral courage and it defines the first essential step in personal growth. We must develop the conviction and courage necessary to resist appealing sins if we are to grow as individuals.

It is especially important for young people to develop moral courage early in life. A person first learns right and wrong, then he is in a position to refine his tools and develop his talents. Peter's stages of growth must be taken in order. Have we really succeeded in teaching our children knowledge, patience, and love if we have neglected to first instill in them a foundation of moral courage?

Joseph was but a handsome young slave when Potiphar's wife tried to lure him into fornication (Gen. 39). But the moral courage he gained by resisting her was the stuff that made him into a great ruler in God's plan. The direction of Moses' life was set when he rejected the "pleasures of sin." (Heb. 11:24-25.) Even Jesus began his career by telling Satan to get away (Luke 4:6-8).

Young people may experience "fiery trials" with "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1 Pet. 4:12; 2:11.) But it is necessary to "flee" these pitfalls before

we can "follow" Christ (2 Tim. 2:2). Sin destroys young lives and robs them of eternal potential. When you ponder your life's way, remember, Peter said moral courage comes first.

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# The Church Of Christ — Greer, S.C.

The church of Christ in Greer began in November, 1966 when a group of Christian church people offered to let area brethren "take over" the use of their store building facility. The elders at the Duncan congregation supported the work enthusiastically. Burl Curtis and Neil Inness were the first full-time workers. Neither lived in Greer. Both commuted from their homes nearby. The work flourished in the Trade Street location. In 1967 the brethren purchased two and one-half acres and a six-room house at 1215 S. Main St. and began meeting there. By the end of 1969 an auditorium was built on the property which would seat 185.

Several campaigns were held in the early years. Many were converted as a result of these efforts. However, very few remain faithful today who were baptized in those early days of the church.

When Burl Curtis returned to his home in Arkansas after many years service in Greenville County, Bill G. Smith began preaching in Greer. He lived in Greenville also. His work was effective and the work moved

forward. A bus program began. The Trinity Lane church in Nashville, Tennessee, agreed to support a full-time worker to live in Greer.

In August, 1973, Jerry Senn and family moved to Greer to become the first full-time preacher to live in the immediate area. They have remained until the present time. In 1977 an educational building was begun which would provide seven classrooms, an office, library and fellowship room. The six-room house was sold and moved off the property. A bus program began when a van was purchased. In 1979 a bus was donated by the supporting church. This work continues.

In January, 1981, Gray and Mary Flippen moved to work alongside the Senns and the Greer brethren as full-time laborers. An aggressive program of work is underway.

The church presently has around 70 members with attendance averaging in the mid-70's. The contribution averages near \$700 per week. A bus program is conducted which provides a "classroom on wheels" for children in the community. They are brought to our building each Sunday morning and Wednesday evening for Bible teaching and training. Some have remained with our program since it began. One bus and a van are now in operation but we have purchased a second bus and will have it operating soon. Children's Bible Hour is a class for children conducted each Sunday morning during the worship hour. There have been some excellent results. Our Bible classes are given great emphasis. Goals have been set for future growth. We are determined to reach them, with God's help.

We anticipate an exceptionally bright future for the cause of Christ in Greer. A warm spirit of love and unity prevails. Presently there are no elders of the congregation. This is one of the priority items for the future. The membership stands on the **truth** as recorded in God's word.

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*"When in doubt, don't."*

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# The South Carolina Lectures

The Sixteenth Annual Lectures were originally scheduled for the Northeast congregation in Greenville, S.C. Because they are presently involved in a building program, the church at Greer was asked to accept responsibility for this year's event. We are delighted to serve as host, with the Northeast brethren supplying some much needed assistance.

The three-day lecture program, November 9-11, will feature twenty-five speakers. Most of them work full time with congregations within the state of South Carolina. Our theme is "Going and Growing for Jesus." We firmly believe the lessons will be both instructive and practical in helping churches do a better job carrying out the "great commission."

James Meadows will discuss three vital topics: "Establishing Authority for Our Methods," "Dealing With Extremes," and "Autonomy, Making It Work." He will deal with these subjects on three successive days. It is our feeling that an improved understanding of the Biblical principles involved in these subjects will help honest brethren solve many brotherhood problems.

David Pharr will conduct an Open Forum each afternoon following the lessons by brother Meadows. Questions related to any Bible subject will be discussed. We will want to be primarily concerned with matters related to our theme. This, we trust, will be a lively hour and one which will prove very practical and informative.

The evening service will be a highlight. We are asking area churches to cooperate in attending all the evening assemblies. Each evening at 7:00 special reports of interest will be presented. This will be followed by a period of inspirational singing. None who love to sing praises to our God will want to miss this! David Wheeler of Charlotte, Frank McElveen of Charleston, and Bill Goodpasture of Northeast in Greenville will be the evening speakers. They will challenge and inspire us greatly.

The church in Greer, assisted by Northeast, will provide the noon meal on Tuesday and Wednesday as well as housing for all

who need such. Other meals will be "dutch treat" at nearby restaurants. We are especially urging everyone to plan to stay for the entire lectureship. It can be an extremely important three days of study and fellowship. Lasting good for the advancement of the Lord's Kingdom can be the result of our coming together.

Howard Winters will have his books on display. He always has the latest and best our brotherhood is producing along with other helpful material for sale. The Southeastern Biblical Institute will have a display and a representative will be available. Other displays are invited as space will allow. Contact us in advance of bringing something for display.

Tapes will be made of all lectures, compliments of the Charlotte Avenue church in Rock Hill. These tapes will be made available shortly after they are delivered for a modest price.

We are excited about the opportunity to host the S.C. Lectures this year. Those who have hosted the S.C. Lectures in the past have done a truly outstanding job. We sincerely hope this year's program will be well attended and prove a great blessing to us all.

Those desiring to serve as hosts of the 1982 lectures should come with plans made to let your desire be known during this year's lectureship.

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*It looks like the secret of success is to start from scratch, but you must keep on scratching.*

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# The Hardest And Best Prayer

David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

In the great example prayer Jesus teaches us to pray "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10.) His own anguished pleading in Gethsemane emphasized "not my will, but thine be done." (Luke 22:42.) This attitude is an absolute requisite for acceptable prayer (1 John 5:14). It is common and proper, therefore, that public and private prayers be formed around this petition. It is the **best** prayer that we can pray. And, at the same time, it is the **hardest**.

It is the **hardest** prayer because it indicates surrender of the stubborn human will. It requires our acknowledging the inferiority of our own wisdom. It minimizes the importance of our own desires. It suggests willingness to be changed and conformed to the purposes of God. Such a prayer, therefore, in all its implications, is not easy to pray. We might prefer to think we are masters of our own lives (see James 4:15). It is hard to pray as Jesus showed us when selfishness and shortsightedness will tempt us to want the reverse — not thy will, but **mine**, be done.

It is, though, the **best** prayer when trying

to make decisions. To sincerely pray it is to imply willingness to obey. It shows concern for making God's choices our choices. Jesus showed the impossibility of salvation for any other than "he that doeth the will of my father." (Matt. 7:21.) God hears the prayers of those who "doeth His will." (John 7:17.) Those who do God's will "abide for ever." (1 John 2:17.) Jesus' own prayer for God's will to be done was joined with his attitude of obedience. He said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38.) Praying "Thy will be done" implies not only the desire that God do what He wills to do, but also that **we** do what He wills for us to do.

It is also the **best** prayer we can pray when we are **seeking blessings**. Every good gift is from above (James 1:17). We are taught to ask for what we want and need; but all requests should be with the provision that God's will be done. He knows better what our needs are and what providence can best supply those needs. We may earnestly desire things that will only hurt us. Fleshly wishes may blind us to spiritual dangers (see James 4:3). But God is too

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good and too wise to give us everything that comes into our minds to want. It is significant that Jesus said, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in **heaven**." The reason heaven is a happy place is because God's will is done there. And we can seek no greater happiness on this earth than to pray that God's will be done.

Consider further that this is the **best** prayer in **times of distress**. We may suffer even for doing well, "if the will of the Lord be so." (1 Pet. 3:17.) The will of man will

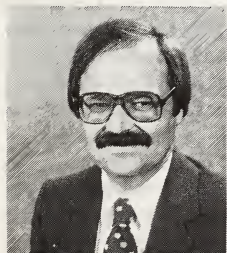
complain and resent the unpleasant things of life. The prayer of faith, however, will say "Thy will be done" even while asking for relief. This was Jesus' attitude in the prayer of Gethsemane. It should be our prayer when facing an uncertain future (Acts 21:14). It should be the prayer of those who feel spiritually threatened (Matt. 18:14). "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." (1 Pet. 4:19.)

## Carolina Pulpit

Edited By

## Johnny Melton

### Biographical Sketch



**Sid Fulford**

Sid Fulford was born February 5, 1947, in DeFuniak Springs, Florida. He moved with his parents to Florence, Alabama in 1960. There, he was graduated in 1965 from Mars Hill Bible School.

Sid began preaching by appointment while a senior in high school. He preached regularly for rural congregations in north Alabama and

middle Tennessee while attending college. He received his college training from Freed-Hardeman, David Lipscomb and the University of Cincinnati. Sid began local work in 1969 with the Central church in Cincinnati, serving there for six years. He then worked with the church in Charlottesville, Virginia, from 1975-76. Since August, 1976 he has preached for the Essex Village church in Charleston, S.C.

Sid married Judy Richardson of Cincinnati in 1970. They have two daughters: Sara, age 8, and Mary, age 4.

### Sermon

## Hard Truth

John 6:53-60

### **Sid Fulford, Charleston, S.C.**

#### **Introduction:**

1. The idea for our lesson is drawn from the disciples' reaction to the teaching of Jesus: "This is a hard saying. Who can accept it?" (A) Their reaction implied that many people would be offended by the teaching of Jesus and turn away. (B) Their suggestion proved to be correct for verse sixty-six says that many did turn away and followed Jesus no more.

2. Some of the teachings of Jesus are very attractive and often men seem naturally drawn to them. (A) His teachings on love, mercy, kindness and forgiveness are quite popular. (B) John 3:16 remains the most familiar Scripture in the minds of most people, chiefly because it is such an attractive statement.

3. But not all the teachings of Jesus are attractive and appealing; sometimes people who

are attracted to some of his teachings are seriously offended by other of his teachings. (A) The same Jesus who told us of the love of God also told us that lust makes us guilty of adultery (Matt. 5:28). (B) Jesus did teach us to be kind and forgiving, but he also told us to love even our enemies (Matt. 5:44).

#### Discussion:

I. With that as our frame of reference, I ask you to think about the following questions.

A. Will God eternally condemn those who live and die in ignorance of the gospel?

B. Will He condemn the person who is sincere, but who believes and practices error relative to the terms of salvation?

C. Do we have the right to say that people will be lost because they do not submit to the demands of the gospel?

II. Why are these questions troublesome to us?

A. We are fearful of being presumptuous or self-righteous, or of appearing to be such.

B. We find repulsive the idea of saying that anyone is lost.

C. We do not want to be, or appear to be, narrow-minded.

III. Let us turn to the Scriptures to discover the truth that will help us in answering these questions.

A. All men are lost because of sin (Rom. 3:9-18; 3:23; 6:23). (1) No one has to be singled out for condemnation; we are all guilty and we are all under the condemnation of a

righteous God. (2) How did we come to be condemned? a. We are not guilty because of "original sin." (1a) The doctrine of original sin is nowhere proclaimed in Scripture. (2a) The doctrine of original sin was introduced several hundred years after the time of Christ and apostles, primarily in an effort to justify infant baptism. b. We become guilty of sin by choice (Rom. 5:12).

B. The only ones who will be saved are those who believe and obey the gospel as it is presented in the Scriptures (Mark 16:15, 16; 2 Thess. 1:8). (1) It is not narrow-minded, nor is it self-righteous, to insist that the terms of salvation announced in the Scriptures be followed. (2) It is not presumptuous to proclaim to the world both the message of condemnation and the message of salvation that God has announced in His word.

#### Conclusion:

1. Truth is not always pleasant and attractive.

2. Many of the teachings of our Lord have proven offensive to many people and they have turned away from the truth.

3. We are reminded of Paul's statement in 2 Thess. 2:10: "They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."

4. Perhaps above everything else we must learn this: Whether the truth of God pleases us or not, our task is to love it because it is the truth, believe it, and obey it.



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# Will Carl Sagan Face Up To An Acceptance Of His "Open Challenge" To Biblical Creationists?

Thomas B. Warren, Cookeville, TN

Dr. Carl Sagan, Professor of Astronomy in Cornell University, was recently described, in a leading journal, as a sort of superstar of science (**Time**, Oct. 20, 1980). Of him **Time** says, "Sagan also issues some open challenges. To creationists, who argue for a biblical interpretation of life's beginnings, he states that evolution is not a theory, it is a fact." (Oct. 20, 1980, p. 63.)

Even before this article appeared in **Time**, the Central church of Christ in Visalia, California, had written (Oct. 9, 1980) both to Professor Sagan and to me, inviting us to be the two disputants in a public, oral debate on the question of the origin of human beings (was it by creation or by evolution?) This effort to arrange such a debate had arisen out of the enormous amount of publicity which had been given, in the various news and entertainment media, to Professor Sagan and his anti-God, anti-creation views. Among these had been Johnny Carson's "Tonight" Show and Sagan's "Cosmos" series on television — both of which were viewed by millions. Then the **Time** article (with Professor Sagan on the cover) appeared under date of October 20, 1980.

Since the **Time** article indicated (1) that Prof. Sagan had issued challenges to "Biblical creationists" and (2) that Sagan **knew** that evolution was **not** merely a **theory** but a **fact**, I felt certain that he would quickly respond by accepting (as I did) the invitation which had been extended to us to debate the question of the ultimate origin of human beings. But Sagan did not respond to the invitation at all.

In the light of Dr. Sagan's lack of response to the invitation to debate, the minister (Mark K. Lewis) who had written the letter (for the church involved which extended the invitation to us) again wrote (on

Dec. 4, 1980) to Professor Sagan urging him to respond to and accept the invitation to debate. Again, no response came from Dr. Sagan.

After waiting almost two months for a response to Lewis' December 4th letter, I myself wrote (on January 26, 1981), to Dr. Sagan, a letter in which I reminded him of his challenge and urged him to accept the invitation to debate publicly the issue.

I sent a copy of the letter to the editors of **Time**. In a letter dated February 17, 1981, Amy Musher, of the **Time** editorial offices, kindly wrote to me, saying that **Time** was unable to publish any part of my letter in its letters column.

So, on February 26, 1981, I wrote to the **Time** editor as follows:

Dear Sir:

Since your rather detailed story (**Time**, October 20, 1980) on Dr. Carl Sagan, indicating that he had issued "some open challenges" to **Biblical creationists** (of which I am one) to deny his (Sagan's) contention that evolution is **not** merely a **theory** but is a **fact**, Prof. Sagan and I have been invited to go to California to engage one another in a public, oral debate on the basic question: do all human beings now living owe their existence ultimately to evolution (by purely naturalistic forces) or to the miraculous creative activity of God? I accepted that invitation immediately after receiving it last fall. In spite of the strong claims stated in his behalf in **Time**, nothing was heard from Prof. Sagan. After some time had elapsed, the party who had extended the invitation (the Central church of Christ in Visalia, Ca., through its minister, Mr. Mark K. Lewis) again wrote to Prof. Sagan, asking for his response to the invitation to debate. Again, there was no response from Prof. Sagan.

So, after further waiting with still no



reply from Prof. Sagan, I myself wrote to him on January 26, 1981, suggesting that due to (1) his strong "open challenge" to Biblical creationists" and (2) the **importance** of the question for our nation and for all mankind (there could hardly be a more important question) that he — as did I — accept the invitation to orally debate the issue of the origin of human beings.

However, at this writing (February 26, 1981), there has still been no word from Prof. Sagan.

Can it possibly be the case that **Time's** reporter misunderstood Prof. Sagan in regard to his challenging Biblical creationists? Surely a scholar of his stature would not issue such a strong "open challenge" and then reject the opportunity to "make it good" when such is offered to him!

In previous oral debates, I have met (on this same basic question) such world-renowned scholars as Dr. A.G.N. Flew (Reading University, England) and Dr. Wallace I. Matson (University of California at Berkeley).

I anticipate that **Time** — being the fair journal that it is — will want to make these facts known to the public.

Respectfully,

(Signed)

Thomas B. Warren

Then, on March 9, 1981, Amy Musher (a **Time** editor) again wrote to me, basically in response to the fourth paragraph of my February 26 letter to **Time**. Editor Musher assured me that **Time** did not misrepresent Prof. Sagan in regard to his challenge to **Biblical creationists** in its October 20 cover story (on Sagan). She said that the story was very carefully checked for accuracy and that much of it was read by Prof. Sagan himself. (However, **Time** has printed **nothing** to make clear to its readers that Prof. Sagan has not even responded to the acceptance of his challenge.)

Thus, it must surely be the case (1) that Prof. Sagan has issued "some open challenges" and (2) that, to creationists who argue for a Biblical interpretation of the ultimate origin of human beings, he emphatically states that evolution is **not** merely a **theory** but is a **fact!**

In the light of the foregoing facts, I would like for the people of America — especially the youth of America — to know that even though Prof. Sagan has boldly offered a challenge to Biblical creationists by stating that evolution is **not** a **theory** but is a **fact**, he clearly seems to be **unwilling** to face up to the obligation under which his issuance of that challenge placed him!

So, I would like to suggest again — in the light of the tremendous importance of this question for our nation and for the world (**every atheist** must be an evolutionist!) — that Prof. Sagan and I debate orally four nights for two hours and ten minutes each night) the following propositions (two nights to each proposition):

1. **Resolved:** I know that God does not exist and that all human beings now living owe their ultimate origin (as human beings) to evolution (by purely naturalistic forces) from non-living matter.

Affirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Carl Sagan

Deny: \_\_\_\_\_

Thomas B. Warren

1. **Resolved:** I know that God does exist and that all human beings now living owe their ultimate origin (as human beings) to the miraculous creative activity of God.

Affirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Thomas B. Warren

Deny: \_\_\_\_\_

Carl Sagan

This is a question of utmost importance to **every** person. If **Prof. Sagan** is right (about evolution and there being no infinite God) then **nothing** really matters. (As it has been well put, "If there is no God, then **everything** is permitted.") On the other hand, if **I** am right (about my view that man **can know** that **God exists** and that **He created** the first human pair), then nothing else matters **more**.

And, let neither Prof. Sagan nor any of his supporters say it should be sufficient to superficially discuss these propositions for some ten to twenty minutes on a radio or television talk show, allowing each speaker no more than ten minutes or so to present

his own case and to refute this opponent's case. A subject so complex cannot be discussed adequately in ten minutes so as to satisfy the minds of an inquiring public. But a four-night debate (with more than two hours each night) during which, in addition to his regular speeches, each disputant has the right to ask questions of the other, will provide a basis for honest people to see just what the truth about the existence of God and the origin of human beings really is.

"The ball is now in Dr. Sagan's court." Will he honor the challenge which he issued to Biblical creationists? If yes, we are ready.

If no, then what rational explanation can he give for his refusal? Will Prof. Sagan prove to be — as some leading journals have intimated — science's **superstar** or merely science's "**super-wind**?"

As a Biblical creationist (to whom Prof. Sagan issued some "open challenges") I have accepted his challenge. How can he honorably refuse to face up to what his challenge obligated him to do?

It is frightening to contemplate the implications — for America — if Prof. Sagan's views should become the prevailing viewpoint of its people.

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## QUESTIONS ANSWERED

# Editorial Glimmerings

Several people are troubled by and some have asked us to deal with 1 Corinthians 12:13, as to whether it teaches that baptism in the Holy Spirit is for all or whether this verse, as does most other passages in the New Testament, means water baptism. The problem is serious enough so that we think a short study of the matter might be useful to all. (For those who wish to make a more extensive study, we have devoted a whole chapter to it in our book, **The Work of the Holy Spirit**.)

The verse in question reads: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." We grant that a surface reading of this verse, apart from the context of the total Scriptural teaching on the subject, might lead one to conclude that it teaches that the baptism of the Spirit puts one into the one body — that is, it puts him into the saved state, but a more detailed study of the verse clearly reveals the fact that it is speaking of baptism in water which is authorized by the Spirit.

This passage is crucial to those who teach that New Testament baptism is the baptism of the Holy Spirit — that Holy Spirit baptism is for everyone who enters the body of Christ. It, in the final analysis, is the only one in the Bible that they can safely rely upon. If it does not teach baptism in the Holy Spirit for all, then none does and their

case is utterly lost. A mature study of the verse, however, will make it as certain as anything can be that Paul had water baptism, not baptism in the Holy Spirit, in mind.

Those who rely on this verse (and as we have said, all must if it is to be proven) to prove that Holy Spirit baptism is for all who obey the Lord, that is all the saved, must do so in total disregard for the internal difficulties it presents to them. For example, they believe that Christians, those already saved and thus in the body, should seek to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. According to them, some receive it, but others do not. Yet they quote this passage to prove that it is for all. In doing so though they overlook an obvious fact: the baptism here is the means of entrance — it puts the one baptized into the body. It is not something that one seeks or receives after he is already a member of the body of Christ. Thus if the verse means Holy Spirit baptism, no one is in the one body who has not been so baptized. This misses absolutely Paul's point. What he teaches is that one is baptized into the one body where he is made to drink into the Spirit (the baptism puts one into the one body and after he is in the body by baptism he is made to drink into the Spirit). Only the baptized are in the body, and only those in the body drink into the Spirit.

But to further emphasize the truth of this verse we will break it down into its

necessary components and study briefly each of them.

1. The authority of baptism — “by one Spirit.” The Spirit here means the Holy Spirit. “By” means that the Holy Spirit is the authority by which one is baptized. The Spirit is thus the revealer, the instructor, not the administrator or the element. When one is led by the Spirit (through the inspired Scriptures) to be baptized, he is baptized by the Spirit, not in the sense in which the Spirit would be the administrator of the element, but in the sense of the one who has revealed (authorized or directed) the baptism.

2. The action (or actor) of baptism — “are all baptized.” Note in particular, the Spirit is the authority, not the actor. The action here is on the part of those being baptized. It is thus the baptism of the Great Commission. And the baptism of the Great Commission may be defined as a command of Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16) in which a penitent believer in Christ as God’s Son (Acts 16:31; 2:38) is buried with Him (Rom. 6:3, 4) in water (Acts 8:35-39), for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), which puts him into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), in whom he arises to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4, 5). Thus by the authority of one Spirit all are baptized in water into the one body.

3. The object (or purpose) of baptism — “into one body.” The baptism of this verse is therefore the baptism that puts one into the body — the body of Christ, the church (Eph. 1:22, 23). The authority is the Spirit; the element is water; the object is entrance into the body. Entering the body is the end result, the object in view as to why the Spirit teaches one to be baptized.

4. The extent of baptism — “whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond.” The baptism of this verse is thus universal. No race or class is exempted from it. Nor is it just for a selected few. For this reason we conclude that it is the baptism commanded of all by Christ in the Great Commission.

5. The blessing derived from baptism — “and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” This states the blessing by those who by the authority of the Spirit are baptized into the one body. To drink into the

Spirit is to drink from the fountain of blessings provided by the Spirit in the Christian system. This is just another way of saying that when one is in the body of Christ he has the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him — that is, he has access to all the spiritual benefits provided by the Spirit in the scheme of human redemption.

The truth of this verse can be seen in a glance when it is broken down into its components:

1. The authority — “by one Spirit.”
2. The action — “are all baptized.”
3. The object — “into one body.”
4. The extent — “Jews or Gentiles, bond or free.”
5. The blessing — “drink into one Spirit.”

Viewed from the proper perspective, this verse teaches precisely what Peter taught in Acts 2:38. On the day of Pentecost when believers cried out and asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:37, 38.) Here the Spirit spoke through Peter — that is, when Peter spoke it was “by the Spirit” (the command to be baptized was by the authority of the Spirit). Everyone (which was later revealed to mean both Jews and Gentiles) was commanded to act — to repent and be baptized. The purpose or object of baptism was “for the remission of sins.” But to be baptized for the remission of sins is the exact equivalent of being baptized into the one body. Those baptized for the remission of sins (into the body of Christ) were promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is identical in meaning with Paul’s words “and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Now since Acts 2:38 teaches baptism in water (the baptism of the Great Commission), and since Acts 2:38 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 are parallel in every essential component, it follows with all the force that logic can have that the baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:13 is water baptism.

It seems to us to argue this point further would be superfluous.







# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

**Dallas, Texas:** The World Mission Information Bank recently released the Summer 1981 Missionary Directory. The Directory lists 332 American missionary families, 38 Non-American missionary families, 51 American missionary apprentice families, and nine American vocational families for a total of 430 family units. This compares to 433 family units in 1979. The directory lists a total of 733 individual missionaries, but does not include the names of some of the wives which were not known when the directory went to press. The information indicates that there has been no increase in our missionary strength in recent years.

**Nashville, Tennessee:** With the opening of school this fall, David Lipscomb College begins its 91st year of operation, having begun in 1891 under the name of Nashville Bible School. Lipscomb has enjoyed record enrollment the past two years and an-

ticipates another record or near record this year. Under President Willard Collins the school has undergone many changes the past years and has expanded its opportunities for educating young people.

**Fort Worth, Texas:** The fifth annual Fort Worth Lectures will be conducted January 10-14 at the Brown Trail congregation. The theme will be "Difficult Texts of the Old Testament Explained."

**Searcy, Arkansas:** Oct. 14-17 are the dates of the 58th annual Harding University Bible Lectureship with the theme "Love One Another."

**Memphis, Tennessee:** The sixth annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship will be held Oct. 18-22 with lectures centering on the modern-day religious cults. The lectureship will be hosted by the Getwell church in Memphis.

## *Carolina Church News*

### NEWS BRIEFS

by David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Fayetteville.** Terry Graves is now working with Helen Street as a full-time evangelist.

**Gastonia.** "The Bible Speaks" radio program is now broadcast on Sunday mornings, 8:00. The Gastonia church has sponsored a local radio program for almost thirty years.

**Mocksville.** Robert Darnell has been employed as the new minister at North Main.

**Greensboro.** Harold Derr has announced his resignation from the pulpit work at Friendly Avenue.

### N.C. Baptisms

Salisbury, 2; Hickory, 1; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; Gastonia, 1; Providence

Road, Charlotte, 2; Burlington, 2; Wilkesboro, 1. Total: 10.

### Raleigh

MITCH MITCHELL, Reporting: The 1981 North Carolina Evangelism Seminar was a great success. G.P. Holt, Rubel Shelly and David Wheeler all did an outstanding job in presenting the gospel in a powerful way. We were all edified and stirred to do greater things for the Lord and His church.

We especially want to thank Howard Winters, David Pharr, and Johnny Melton for their participation with special classes. Each of the special classes contributed greatly to our understanding of how to be what God wants us to be. We appreciate the dedication and preparation of these men and their work in the Carolinas.

There were approximately 870 people

registered from 52 North Carolina cities and eight other states. The audience Sunday morning consisted of 1015 people who gathered for the closing day of this great weekend. We want to thank everyone who had a part in making this seminar the best yet. We look forward to the 1982 North Carolina Evangelism Seminar to be held September 3-5, 1982, at the Brooks Avenue congregation in Raleigh.

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Greenville.** Washington Avenue church has expanded their benevolent program to include the loaning of health equipment. Three young men have been baptized there this summer.

**Allendale.** The Essex Village church in Charleston plans to sponsor a radio program in Allendale. This is in cooperation with the West Sparta church, Sparta, Tennessee. Keith Dixon, Sid Fulford, and Charles Meyers (preacher at West Sparta), will take turns speaking.

**Columbia.** Bernard Keene and R.W. Senn have been selected to serve as elders at St. Andrews Road.

**Greenville.** The Northeast congregation still has bonds to sell, with nearly two years of interest already earned. Contact them for details.

**Spartanburg.** A review of growth at Central showed an average of 28 baptisms per year since 1975.

**S.C. Baptisms**

Myrtle Beach, 3; Greenwood, 1; Washington Avenue, Greenville, 3; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Union, 1. Total: 9.

**Union**

T. CARTER GEER, Reporting: As of January 1, 1981, the Lakeside Drive

(Palmetto) church of Christ, which met at the corner of Lakeside Drive and Seigler Road in Union, S.C., and whose mailing address was Post Office Box 7, Union, S.C. 29379, no longer exists.

The first Sunday in January, 1981 (January 4) this congregation merged with the Union church of Christ which meets at the corner of Buffalo Road and the 176 By-Pass. The mailing address of the combined congregations (Union church of Christ) is Post Office Box 64, Union, S.C. 29379.

At the present time, and since January 1, 1981, we are receiving mail addressed to the Lakeside Drive (Palmetto) church of Christ, and will continue to do so until December 31, 1981. The postmaster will be instructed, that, as of January 1, 1982, we will no longer accept mail addressed to Lakeside Drive (Palmetto) church of Christ or to Post Office Box 7, Union, S.C. 29379. He will be instructed to return all mail, so addressed, to sender.

Any and all mail intended for the church of Christ in Union, S.C., should be addressed: Union church of Christ, P.O. Box 64, Union, S.C. 29379.

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**GOSPEL MEETINGS**

**North Carolina**

Helen Street, Fayetteville, Youth Rally ..... November 6-8

**South Carolina**

Essex Village, Charleston, Family Workshop ..... October 23-25

# Book Views

**A Commentary on the Gospel According to John**, Guy N. Woods; Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, TN; 448 pages, cloth \$9.95.

For the first 125 years of the restoration movement our brethren did not write many commentaries — that was a field almost totally abandoned to denominational theologians. But times have changed. In the past half century a considerable number has appeared . . . and they keep coming. Thus a new commentary is no unusual event among us, but an unusual commentary is unusual. And that is precisely the kind Guy N. Woods produces. We have long believed that he has the finest exegetical mind to come out of the movement to restore New Testament Christianity. His analysis of a passage shimmers with brilliant light. He is a master at exegesis. And he has now blessed the world, and especially the cause of truth, with a commentary on the gospel according to John. And while narratives do not lend themselves as readily to brilliant exegesis as does the epistles or doctrinal passages, brother Woods has done a marvelous job in getting to the heart of every verse in the book of John. His analytical mind enables him to quickly get at the truth, expose error, summarize the contents, restate the contents in a clear concise way, and thereby give the needed help to understand each text in its immediate context and in the context of the whole book. It is written for and supplies the needs of the average Sunday school teacher, but there is also plenty of food for thought for the more advanced student and the scholar. In fact, it has such a fine balance between the practical and scholarly that we predict it will be popular on both accounts. If so, then here is one of very few commentaries (such as McGarvey's original on Acts) that belong to the ages — it will live as long as time lasts. This is a book that should grace every library, both large and small. — HW

**The Mysterious Marvelous Snowflake and Other Object Lessons for Children**, Harvey D. and Patsie S. Moore; Abingdon, 201 Eighth Ave., South, Nashville, Tn. 37202; 127 pages, paper \$4.95.

This book contains 50 object lessons for children. The lessons are short and usually contain but one point. The lessons are recorded in the first person just as they were delivered to the children. It is an excellent source of material for anyone who teaches small children. — JM

**Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of Christ, and Sermons on Saints and Sinners**, John Waddey; J. Choate Publications, Winona, Miss. 38967; 112 and 122 pages, paper.

Here are two more works from the prolific pen of John Waddey. Both books first appeared in 1974. They are now in their third printing which indicates the popularity they have enjoyed. The author is a good student and organizer. The first is a study guide for new Christians, consisting of two major sections with chapters dealing with responsibility of new Christians and chapters dealing with major doctrines of the Bible. The material is designed to be taught in a new converts class. However, all Christians would profit from a study of it. The second is composed of biographical outlines of Bible characters. One of the best ways of studying Scripture is to study the lives of the men of the Bible. These sermons would make an excellent series for Sunday night services. — JM

**What Is a Christian? and Other Sermons Presenting Good News**, Larry A. West; J.C. Choate Publications, Burton Drive, Winona, Ms. 38967; 187 pages, paper \$4.00.

This is a compilation of sermons used by brother West on the five-minute radio program "Good News." There are 64 sermons included in the book. And they are quite well done. Anyone looking for ideas for radio programs will find this book to be a gold mine. Also, as seed thoughts for full-length sermons this is a valuable work. It is valuable as devotional reading and a good contribution to the available material on radio preaching. We recommend it highly. — JM





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## Books For Every Library



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— **The Second Coming and Other Sermons** by Guy N. Woods. Ten of the finest sermons from one of the greatest preachers in the 20th century. A must for everyone who wishes to have a clearer understanding of the Scriptures. 175 pages. Beautifully bound in cloth with colorful dust jacket. Price \$5.00.

— **The Holy Spirit — His Indwelling and Work** by Howard Winters. A short study of the Holy Spirit, His indwelling and work. "The best, clearest, most concise short statement setting forth the truth on this subject that we have seen." — Ira Y. Rice, 48 pages. Price \$1.50.

— **The Bible and Strong Drink** by Howard Winters. Social drinking, nor any other

form, cannot be justified by the Scriptures. This book challenges the most dreadful drug problem in America. It should be placed in the hands of everyone, studied in every classroom, and preached from every pulpit. 80 pages. Price \$2.50.

### BIBLE CLASS MATERIAL

— **The Heart of Romans** by Howard Winters. A workbook with an outline and explanatory notes on Paul's letter to the Romans. The comments make this a mini-commentary as well as a class study book. 36 pages. Price \$1.00.

— **Basic Bible Studies** by Howard Winters. A 13-lesson workbook on fundamental Bible subjects, such as God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, Christian living, etc. 31 pages. Price 80¢.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 23, NO. 11, NOVEMBER 1981



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Students — St. Andrews Presbyterian College

Left to right: Dave Brangenberg, Chuck Booker, Kay Stanley,  
Mamie McDuffie. Insert: Will Connell  
(See Page 11)

# The Invisible Hand Of God

Larry Eppley\*, Rockingham, NC

It was quite literally a feast fit for a king, as Babylonian ruler Belshazzar assembled one thousand nobles, and drank toasts to his false gods from the sacred vessels taken generations earlier from the temple of Jerusalem. Not even the great Nebuchadnezzar, who had invaded Judea, has been so bold!

Suddenly the profane monarch became pale and limp, his shaking limbs unable to support him. The festive idolators looked on in awe as a visible hand inscribed a strange communication on the palace wall. When Daniel would arrive per royal request with the meaning of the mysterious message, there would be no doubt. Belshazzar and court had been visited by "the visible hand of God." (Daniel, chapter five.)

It seems strange to some that God would appear to this profane infidel, but not to those who daily serve Him. Many a professing believer has wondered, "Why does God not show himself to me?" In fact, there are those who have convinced themselves that God has done just that, and will create an array of bizarre testimonies to that effect. But the point is that God nowhere promises the twentieth century Christian a supernatural appearance.

Today's believer, however, is not without the promise of an aware and active God. In fact, the apostle Paul emphatically summarizes this great guarantee that the Christian is never alone. Romans 8:28 (NASB) reads, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." What a marvelous declaration: the continuous presence of "the invisible hand of God!"

This promise of "special" providence (for we believe that Paul has more in view than the rains which fall on the just and the unjust) is of value to us only to the degree that we accept it and claim it. For this reason several Carolina preachers have joined me in this special study of the

message of Romans, chapter eight, verse twenty-eight.

Our prayer is that this effort (regardless of whatever deficiencies attend it) will encourage many to claim this great truth for themselves.

## And We Know . . .

Larry Eppley, Rockingham, NC

"And we know." It was the apostle Paul and the Christians of Rome to whom this statement was primarily applied, but it was a confidence which could be shared by any Christians at any time.

For the thrust of this statement was nothing less than the guarantee of providence for the child of God. Paul was convinced that, even as he was writing, God was behind the scenes, taking the colorful strands of circumstance and quietly weaving a pattern of blessings for every Christian as He used those dedicated lives in the fabric of His on-going purpose.

Paul knew. His readers could and did know. And that assurance was just as certain as the negative circumstances which Paul and others had experienced. Whether peril or sword, God could and would work

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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\*Guest Editor



all things to their good.

However, we must ask, how did Paul know this?

**1. Paul did not know about the providence of God intuitively.** In other words, this knowledge was not based upon a personal hunch, borne out in his feelings. It was not some innate understanding that was responsible for this confidence. Paul would not have said, "I know that Divine Providence is real, because I feel it within."

In fact, what is often referred to as a "providential leading," if properly expressed, would actually be a contradiction in terms. When one talks of an inner inclination that he should take a particular course of action and declares this to be a divine directive, he is not speaking of providence. Rather, assuming he has in mind something more than an active conscience, he is claiming divine inspiration — a direct revelation from on high. Should such a thing occur, it would be on par with a vision, such as John had on the Isle of Patmos, or Peter on the housetop in Joppa. It would be miraculous in nature — God expressing himself supernaturally. Now it is true that some claim this kind of divine communication for themselves. But the point is that such a one is speaking of the miraculous, not the providential. The providential, by definition, must refer to the behind-the-scene activity of our Creator — the "invisible hand of God."

**2. Paul did not know about Divine providence through experience.** Paul would not have said, "I did not believe in God's behind-the-scene workings until I experienced them." For this would imply, would it not, that for one to learn of God's providence that God would have to come to the foreground? And this would cease to be providential, for a miracle would have occurred as soon as God stepped forward and identified himself.

Consider, if you will, Esther of the Old Testament. There has never been a more vivid example of God's provision for his people. God, it seems, is on every page — in every event — working all things to the good of those who love Him. Are you ready for a surprise? The name of God is nowhere to be found. The Supreme Being at no time

directly calls attention to His work. The closest we have to a reference to the work of God is Mordecai's statement to Esther: "And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?" (Esther, 4:14, NASB.) This question, found in a conversation concerning relief and deliverance arising for the Jews, implies quite a bit about the "invisible hand of God." But even the principals, Esther and Mordecai, could not say for sure what God was or was not doing.

Again, our point is that unless a direct revelation had occurred (which evidently had not) no one could speak with authority concerning the precise workings of the Divine. This does not mean, however, that God was not in fact working.

It is true that Joseph does make such a statement regarding God's Providence. The thrilling conclusion of the book of Genesis records Joseph assuring his fearful brothers that vengeance was not his plan. Referring to their selling him into slavery decades earlier, Joseph cited the ability of God to work all things to his (and his nation's) good. "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive." (Gen. 50:20.)

Joseph could be certain of his conclusion for several reasons. First of all, God had been dealing with Joseph directly (miraculously) as well as indirectly (providentially). Joseph's story practically begins with supernatural revelations coming in the form of dreams, which (as it turns out) are prophetic statements that Joseph would see fulfilled. Add to this the supernatural gifts of interpreting the dreams of others (the chief butler, chief baker, and Pharaoh himself) and it is obvious that there is miraculous activity involved. Little wonder that Joseph can speak with so much precision about God's workings.

Next, we have the fact that Joseph made this particular statement after an intriguing chain of events had occurred. It is possible that Joseph, had he not heard from God directly, still could have perceived the behind-the-scenes efforts of God on his behalf. But not at once. And even at the end of a long chain of events, Joseph would

need certain knowledge that there was a God who was indeed interested in his circumstances. So, we again state our premise that strictly speaking one cannot "experience" providence.

### 3. Paul could know of divine providence only through revelation.

Our point has been that a providential act does not call attention to itself. This is not to say that Paul was not a beneficiary of providence. It is to say rather that he knew of God's willingness to work all things to his good only because God had so stated it.

As will be established in other articles, this promise of special providence is not universal, and must be understood to be consistent with God's purpose. Even before Paul was born, God had made certain revelations concerning His purpose. The Jewish Scriptures (the Old Testament) are nothing less than a series of announcements of that purpose and then the records of that purpose being carried out. From Abraham onward (Gen. 12) God's plans are clearly revealed concerning a special nation which

would provide the historical context for the entrance of His Son into the world. It is into this framework that Joseph, Esther, and all the Old Testament greats come. Then finally this chosen nation, defiled often by sin and constantly chastised by God, is nevertheless preserved that Jesus might be born. It is not an accident that this inhabitant of Nazareth is the descendant of Abraham through Judah, through David. For God had so planned it.

This series of revelations divinely recorded and providentially preserved had great significance for Paul, the Jewish Christian sent to the Gentiles. For he knew that when he surrendered himself to Christ and his Way, that he had moved into the realm of God's Plan. He was "called according to God's purpose" by the power of the gospel (Rom. 8:28; 1:16). He, therefore, could expect God to work for his good.

Paul could be certain about God's willingness to work all things to his good. And he knew that this promise applied to others. So whether at Rome or Jerusalem, whether an apostle or not, whether the first century or twentieth, God's promise to work behind the scenes on behalf of those who loved him could be claimed and trusted.

### We Can Know


Therefore, we, like Paul, can know that we are within the realm of God's special providence. This does not mean that we can constantly point to any or every event occurring in our lives and categorically affirm that we can see the hand of God. For God's promise to us is not that we shall be informed of every action which God makes on our behalf; but that even when we have no awareness of it, that God is nevertheless working through us and for us.

As it was with the ancients, whether Joseph or Paul, so it can be with us, if we "love God, and are called according to his purpose." And as long as we have God's word for it, we need no present-day miracle before we can know that God is now, and has been working all things to our ultimate good. We need only to recognize this fact, and open our lives to its marvelous implications.

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# Divine Providence

**Douglas Couch, Ashboro, NC**

"Thou art Jehovah, even thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and thou preservest them all." (Neh. 9:6.) From the highest angels down to the lowliest beast, all owe their existence to mighty Jehovah. Were it not for His continuous watchcare, all would perish.

The faithful child of God is blessed by being a double recipient of Providence. He shares in **General Providence**, which is given to man, beast, saint and sinner alike (Matt. 5:45; 6:26). **Special Providence** however, is reserved for him only. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) Since this applies to God's child, should he not investigate what his Father has promised to him?

## Providence Has Been Misunderstood

Many erroneous ideas exist today about Providence. Some feel that it pertains to the miraculous. The Scriptures teach however that miracles have ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10), while Providence continues. Others believe that God is not interested in the events of men and has left all to chance accidents, or natural law. Paul refuted this idea when he said, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28.) There are others who believe that all events are ordained by God's Providence. While God works through events in Providence, we would not say that all events occurred because he ordained it. To do so would ascribe evil to God. Providence is interpreted by even others as a "working of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit works in the life of the Christian through his word (Eph. 6:17), whereas Providence operates through **things** (Rom. 8:28). Upon further examination, we shall see what things!

## Providence Works Through Things

Revelation shows that God has operated

providentially in certain events to bring about his desired will. Both Jeremiah and Paul were born to proclaim God's message (Jer. 1:4-5; Gal. 1:15-16). Therefore we can say that in some cases God's providence uses the birth of a child to accomplish his will. Another case involves a person or a family moving into a new area. Jesus told his apostles "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2.) If Providence is not a divine reality then why pray to God?

The Scriptures teach that sometimes God mysteriously works in events that we would consider undesirable. As previously pointed out, God is not responsible for the evil that men commit but He can use these acts to bring about a desired result. The murder of Jesus was performed by wicked men yet it was within the plan of God to bring salvation to the world (Acts 2:23). Onesimus was a slave who stole from his master then ran away, only to be befriended by Paul and subsequently baptized (Phil. 15). Was it just a coincidence? Paul was shipwrecked for three months on the island of Melita. While gathering sticks for a fire, a poisonous snake bit him on the hand. Paul was unharmed but the snake fell from his hand dead. People changed their mind about Paul and he was able to teach many (Acts 28:4-10). Sometimes God can use a person's sickness or handicap to fulfill a divine purpose. Paul thought his handicap placed a limitation on God working in him yet God used it to magnify the power of the gospel (2 Cor. 12:7-10). A man born blind was used to further the cause of Christ (John 9:2-3). Even actual cases of war have been used by God as providential judgments on a certain class of people (Isa. 10:5-20; Deut. 28:49-50; Jer. 1:14-16).

As we can readily see, "all things" in Romans 8:28 includes both good and evil actions, desirable and undesirable conditions, marvelous and tragic events in the lives of men. God's infinite wisdom and power will not allow his plan to be overridden.



## Providence Does Not Guarantee All Good Things for Christians

Many Christians live their lives as if Romans 8:28 says, "all things will be good." They welcome that which is good but seem to resent or fear those things which are unpleasant. But the message of this verse ought to be a source of strength and encouragement for every Christian. No matter how bleak or unpleasant the future may seem to be, God will work things for your spiritual benefit.

We need to recognize the value of those hardships which occur in our lives. God can cause them to pay spiritual dividends for us. James 1:2-3 teaches that adversity is a character builder. Glass which has been under heat and pressure for extended

periods of time becomes hard enough to drive nails in wood.

Difficulties sometimes bring glory to God. From a purely physical standpoint, Providence makes no sense. Yet our endurance under providential hardships teaches a visible lesson that life is more than the empirical world. The suffering of Jesus was to teach us how to accept suffering (1 Pet. 2:21). The martyrdom of early Christians was said by Tertullian to be the seed of the kingdom. Suffering, whether it be emotional or physical, can be used by the Lord for a spiritual purpose.

## Providence Weaves Events in the Lives of Faithful Christians for Their Eternal God

God wants to give His children physical blessings but sees that sometimes they may be harmed by those blessings. His primary concern then is always for the spiritual health. The Bible teaches there are special avenues of God's care. He cares by offering a way of escape for every temptation (1 Cor. 10:13), by having angels care for us in some way (Heb. 1:14). That angels care for God's saints is undisputed, but how or what angels do has not been revealed to us. Another aspect of God's care is His providential chastening in order to produce the fruit of righteousness (Heb. 12:11; Rev. 3:19).

We must remember that special Providence does in no way override the free will of man. God simply provides the means and opportunities for spiritual blessings. Man must take advantage of these opportunities.

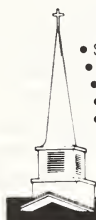
## Conclusion

Providence is a subject that has been neglected and misunderstood. A realization of Providence though will help us to remain faithful in any situation, to develop faith to overcome all obstacles, to be courageous to lay down our life if need be. A knowledge of Providence then helps us to accept whatever life gives us. We may not understand how some events fit into God's plan but some day we will understand. To borrow the words of Jesus, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt understand hereafter." (John 13:7.)

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# To Them That Love The Lord

**Harvey Allen, Bennettsville, SC**

The comforting assurance that "all things work together for good" is promised only "to them that love the Lord." Thus, the full benefit of God's providence can be experienced only in the lives of those who love God and trust Him to bring some good out of every situation. But who is the one who loves the Lord?

## **Love Implies Prayer**

Although love for God affects every area of our lives, one common manifestation of that love which is especially relevant to the providence of God is the practice of prayer. When we examine in the Scriptures the lives of men possessed of a deep love for God, such as David, Daniel, Paul, and above all, Jesus, we recognize a common desire to spend time communing with their God. They valued prayer as an opportunity to seek help and guidance, especially (but not only) in times of crisis.

Perhaps we can best describe the God of providence and prayer as "the God who is there." God has ever sought close communion with man. He wants to be our Heavenly Father, One to whom we can come to share times of joy and of grief, in whose presence we can pour out our hearts. God is there and wants us to call on Him for help in facing life's problems (1 Pet. 5:7; Matt. 11:28-29).

## **The Barrier of Sin**

Because of sin, man became blind to God's presence and created a gulf between God and himself. Paul describes the situation in Acts 17:27, picturing man's efforts to find God as groping in the dark, "though he be not far from everyone of us." The picture of God throughout the Bible is still, despite man's continued rejection, the God who is there.

God's eagerness for man to be able to call on Him, to be accessible to man, had to overcome the barrier of sin. The words of a popular hymn remind us of God's act of reaching out to man in sin to enable man to reach out to God: "O the mighty gulf that

God did span, at Calvary." The parable of the prodigal son also speaks eloquently of God's desire for communion with man despite the sin problem. In order to reach out to sinful man, to understand our temptations, and to open the door of fellowship with Him, God took upon Himself the form of humanity in Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:14-18). Through this act, it is possible for us to enter God's presence with confidence and seek the help we need to overcome the world (Heb. 4:15-16; 10:19-22).

## **God — the Participant**

The God of providence (who causes all things to work together for our good) is the God who is there, who is sensitive to the needs and desires of those who love Him and call on Him in prayer. At times, we are all inclined to view God in much the same way as the psychiatrist who merely listens to the problems of his client without offering counsel as to how to deal with them. And so God is rendered a nonparticipant in our lives, while prayer becomes a means of persuading ourselves to accept everything as is.

Obviously God knows our needs much better than we, and prayer does help us understand and accept God's will when we do not like the way things are going. (Example of Paul, 1 Cor. 12:7-10.) The New Testament teaching on prayer presents "the God who is there" as not only accessible to man, but also responsive to the prayers of those who love Him. James 5:16 affirms that "the . . . prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The specific reference may be to miraculous healing and to a prayer for forgiveness, but who can deny that God still responds to the prayer of the righteous, albeit through (non-miraculous) providence? Does not the Heavenly Father desire that His children ask Him for favors, and would that not require providential activity? (Matt. 7:7-11).

Those who love the Lord have the assurance that the God who is there is attentive to their prayers and responsive to their requests, as He works all things together for their good.

# The Called According To His Purpose

Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC

The Bible, although correctly divided into 66 books and not so correctly into 1,189 chapters, could, for study purposes, be considered as one book consisting of four sections: section 1, the creation of man as an upright or righteous being (Gen. 1 and 2); section 2, the fall of man into sin (Gen. 3); section 3, the development and foretelling of human redemption (the remainder of the Old Testament); section 4, the perfection and revelation of the scheme of redemption through Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory (the whole New Testament). One profound division of the fourth section is the book of Romans. It is a profoundly logical presentation of the scheme of redemption, and the whole is surveyed in on sweeping statement in 8:28-30.

## The Called

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) The same people or group are described by the expressions, "them that love God" and "them who are the called according to his purpose." To be called is to love God, and to love God (in the Biblical sense of love) is to be called. But those who love God are those who obey His will in all things. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. . . ." (John 14:21.) "If a man love me, he will keep my words. . . ." (John 14:23.) On the other hand, those who do not keep His sayings do not love Him (John 14:24).

When God made man, He made him for a purpose. This is true of the first man, Adam; it is equally true of every man. The purpose for his being might be stated in many different ways, but Solomon perhaps best summed it up by saying, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl. 12:13.) It is interesting to note that the word "duty" does not appear in the original Hebrew. It

was added by the translators to help, in their estimation, to bring out the meaning of the verse. But the added word may do us more harm here than good. We could probably understand the author's meaning and purpose better by omitting it. Hence, to fear God and keep His commandments is **the whole of man** — the whole purpose of his being. To do the will of God, then, whatever that will may be, is the reason man exists.

This can be further seen in Paul's words, "called according to his purpose." The call is the call that brings man into God's purpose — the called are those who are filling the purpose of their being. What is God's purpose? Whiteside states it clearly: "God's purpose in sending his Son into the world was to save those who believe in him. He, therefore, purposed to save men through his Son. It is his purpose to save all who want to do right." (Matt. 5:6.) Hence, all who feel the burden of sin and their need of righteousness, of justification, are called. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) Those who answer this call are **the called according to his purpose.**" (Emphasis his, HW.)

But there is more: verse 29 starts with the word "for" (Greek *oti*, because), which ties verse 28 to 29 and 30. Thus the called are those whom God foreknew. But whom did He foreknow? Those whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. Hence, those whom God foreknew were those who would be conformed to the image of Christ. God did not predestinate certain individuals to be saved or lost. To so understand this verse is to totally misunderstand it. What he predestinated was that those whom he called (those saved) would be conformed to the likeness of His Son. The character of "the called" was predestinated; each individual must determine for himself as to whether he will accept the call — as to whether he will conform to the image of Christ or not. The called are the conformed — those who reflect in their own lives and character the image or likeness of Christ.



Those whom God foreknew (predestinated) He called; those He called He also justified. Justification is a legal term and it means that one stands just in the sight of law. There are three ways one might be justified: (1) having never sinned or violated the law; (2) having sinned or violated the law and paying the penalty of the law in full; (3) having sinned but having the penalty paid by another. The third is the means by which we stand justified in the eyes of God. We sinned; Jesus paid our penalty by His death on the cross. Thus justification can come only by Christ — only by our being conformed to the image of God's Son.

After justification comes glorification. "And whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8:30.) Thus God called those He foreknew; those He foreknew He justified; those He justified He also glorified. Or as stated by Paul elsewhere, "He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will." (Eph. 1:5, NIV.)

### How Called?

There is in the religious world a gross misapprehension of how one is called by God (that is, how he is invited to become a Christian). It is widely considered that God does this in some mysterious way, by impressions, experiences, emotional disturbances, etc. But not so. God calls providentially.

God has worked in two entirely different ways to bring man to redemption (although we may not always be able to satisfy ourselves with a sharp distinction between the two). He works miraculously and He works providentially. When He works miraculously He does so directly, that is, without means. The miraculous was used to establish His laws and to set His systems into operation. After His systems and laws were established He then worked through them, that is, He worked providentially or indirectly.

Now the question must be answered, does God call miraculously (directly or apart from His laws) or does He call providentially (indirectly or through His laws). Fortunately for us we do not have to con-

jecture about the answer: it is given to us by an inspired man. Paul said, "Wherefore he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14.) Thus God calls providentially — that is, He calls through the gospel. Lard effectively points this out: "In the **prothesis** all things pertaining to man's redemption were set before God, and among them his predetermination that man should be called by the gospel. 'To which (salvation) he called you by our gospel.' Hence to be called according to God's purpose, **prothesis**, is to be called by the gospel. It is therefore not to be called by some secret impulse of the Holy Spirit; neither is it to be called 'effectually' or 'ineffectually,' as the schoolmen phrase it. It is simply to be called by hearing the gospel preached. This call we are absolutely free to accept or reject; and accordingly as we do that or this, we will be saved or lost."

The gospel call is the birthright of every lost man. Jesus said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15, 16.) Everyone who hears the gospel is called (but not the called) — they are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. But not all who hear the call will accept the invitation to come. Jesus said, "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." (Matt. 20:16.) Only those who hear the gospel and accept its divine terms of pardon are promised salvation — only they are the called.

### Response

When the gospel is preached, the hearers are then responsible for their action or reaction. They may reject the message and remain lost or they may accept and obey it and thereby be saved. The response is their obligation. Thus the preached word (the call) requires the hearer to:

1. Believe in Christ as God's Son (John 3:16). Without this faith one cannot be saved (John 8:24).

2. Repent or turn away from all sins (Acts 17:30). Without repentance one will perish (Luke 13:3).

3. Be buried with Christ in baptism for the remission of sins (Rom. 6:4; Acts 2:38). Without baptism (which is the consummating act in the new birth) one cannot enter the kingdom (John 3:5).

4. Rise from the watery grave to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). The old man of sin is buried; the new man of righteousness is raised (Eph. 4:21-24).

God's scheme of redemption has been provided for everyone (1 John 2:2), but all will not be saved. Why? Because all will not

meet the requirements of the gospel. Salvation depends upon one's response to the gospel call. Those who respond to the call (of the gospel) by explicit and implicit obedience (Heb. 5:8, 9), those who follow God's pattern and thereby become conformed to the image of Christ, are those who are the called according to God's purpose. They are those who live according to the design and purpose for which they were made.



## The Purpose Of God

**Will Connell, Rockingham, NC**

There is no doubt that God has a purpose behind every divine act. Of the many purpose statements to be found throughout the Old and New Testaments, perhaps none is any more complete than Paul's declaration that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them. . . ." (2 Cor. 5:19, NASB.) According to Paul's letter to the Ephesians, this was God's "eternal purpose" reaching back "before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 3:11, 1:4.)

The conception which one has of God's eternal purpose will determine whether he can seek an effective relationship with God. The Bible clearly teaches that such a relationship transforms the individual, making him a tool by which God shapes events and alters attitudes.

It is possible to conceive of God's eternal purpose in fatalistic terms. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary describes fatalism as "a doctrine that events are fixed in advance for all time in such a manner that human beings are powerless to change them." But what of divine activity in the affairs of men? If fatalism were the whole truth about our existence, God could at no time and in no way intervene in the affairs of men from day one onward. However, Scripture leads us to a different conclusion.

First, there was divine intervention when Jesus came to earth. Though we know that this event was foreordained (1 Pet. 1:19, 20), we cannot reduce this to "mere fate." There was present a divine awareness in the

sending of the Son into the human realm. "When the fulness of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law." (Gal. 4:4, NASB.)

Second, concerning Jesus' relationship with the Father, there is a caring and working God. To cite but one example, why would Jesus have prayed in the garden, if his God were not responsive? And how can we explain the appearance of an angel sent to strengthen him? (Note Luke 22:39-44.) Hebrews 5:7 records, "In the days of his flesh, when he offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to Him who was able to save him from death, and who was heard because of his piety."

Finally, specific instructions were given that would only be applicable in the case of a presently active God. Paul made many requests, such as Ephesians 6:18-20, for the prayers of others on his behalf. Obviously he expected these prayers to be heard and to have an effect on his situation. In Philipians 4:6 instruction is given to let our requests be made known to God. In no way is there a limit placed upon this instruction. It will not "run out" before the Lord comes again.

Consider the practical impact of a fatalistic faith upon our lives. Although believing in God, we might nevertheless neglect prayer, assuming that God is already doing or has already set to be done what He has willed. Viewing God's will as already intact, we would next conclude that our participation will be unnoticed in the outcome. While it is clear that God has a

great "master plan" (for the Scriptures clearly teach this) the Plan nevertheless includes the right of all Christians to participate. If not, we are left with the subtle offshoots of a fatalism which would leave

us powerless and unmotivated!

May the Biblically revealed characteristics of our presently active God draw us to a closer, more effective relationship with Him!

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## All Things For Good – An Example

**Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC**

Small things often result in great events.

While no one can point to a single event or circumstance and say positively that this constitutes a providential act of God, we can most assuredly observe some seemingly adverse happenings and see in them how God has used them to bring about good for His people and His cause. History is replete with such events. Or to be more specific, each individual life is full of them. Who cannot look back and see how the direction of his whole life was changed by some small and seemingly insignificant thing? This should lead us to respect, not despise, the day of small things (cf. Zech. 4:10). All of us are likely to see unwanted things, such as accidents, suffering, pain, sorrow, or death, as plagues, useless and worthless, that life would be better off without. But not so with God. He works great results from small things and turns suffering and sorrow into eternally rewarding events. Consider the following example of how God may work all things to the good of those who love Him and wish, above everything else, to do His will:

In 1842 (which sounds like ancient history to most of us) Tolbert Fanning, a powerful preacher in the early days of the restoration movement, decided to take a vacation and go on a southern tour (for the purpose of regaining his and his wife's health and do some preaching along the way). During the tour he stopped at Russellville, Alabama, and preached for a day or two. There were no results. He decided to move on. He got only a short distance from the town when a buggy spring broke. The spring could not be repaired and he was informed that it would be several days before it could be duplicated. While he waited, he decided to announce preaching for a few more days.

The people then began to come to hear him. The crowds continued to grow day by day and he extended his efforts for about five weeks. By the time the meeting ended he had baptized 125 people, people who might have otherwise been lost, and changed the whole history of the church in Russellville. And all this because of a broken buggy spring!

*God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm.*

— Cowper

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## St. Andrews Bible Study Groups Continue

**Will Connell, Rockingham, NC**

The church of Christ of Rockingham has been greatly encouraged by the dedication of the faithful Christians who are attending St. Andrews Presbyterian College in nearby Laurenburg, NC. Not only are these young men and women regular in their own attendance, but often invite other students to accompany them to worship services. We have been impressed with their desire to be involved in the work of the Rockingham church.

St. Andrews, a private four-year liberal arts college, prides itself in its academic excellence, brought about by its highly qualified faculty and unique approaches to learning. In addition, special planning makes it possible for physically handicapped persons to participate in the college's programs. Also, the college encourages its students to participate in the



activities of area churches.

On Monday evenings, on-campus discussion/study groups are offered by the Rockingham church, providing interested individuals an opportunity to discuss the validity of Christianity as a personal lifestyle. This weekly discussion, known as "Cross-Current," is structured in such a way that the Bible stands foremost as the authority, and that the teaching is of a non-denominational direction. Several have found in this open-style discussion answers upon which to build and strengthen their

lives.

As the coordinator of these weekly discussion groups for three years, I am personally grateful for those who have helped so much: to the administrators and other leaders of the college for their cooperation; and the students who have provided the setting for this effort with their questions and their honest input. We are especially thankful for every one who is seeking God daily and striving to radiate His love to those around them.



## The Savior Of Sinners

**Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC**

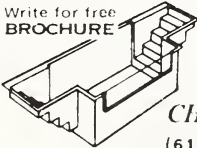
Paul wrote to Timothy saying, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1:15.) Perhaps we can better appreciate the beauty, wisdom, and force of this statement by breaking it down into and discussing each of its component parts.

**1. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.** A "saying" is a proverb, expression, saw, adage, maxim, truism, aphorism, dictum, motto, precept, apothegm, epigram, byword, or moral. In short, it is distilled wisdom, a profound principle condensed into a brief statement, one that is readily understood by anyone of

average intelligence. The principle contained in this saying is worthy of all acceptance because it is a truth that lies at the heart of salvation from sins.

**2. Christ Jesus.** Christ is the heart and core, the bone and marrow, the central nerve system of everything pertaining to salvation. His virgin birth, His perfect life, His sacrificial death, His miraculous resurrection, His glorious ascension back to the Father, and His promise to come again are all components of His mission. They are integral and fundamental parts of the scheme of human redemption. Jesus said of Himself, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10.) But before He offered salvation it was necessary for Him to give a plan to save. Thus He came to pay the price of death for sins — His death paid the ransom for lost souls condemned to death. It is His blood that makes the plan efficacious, that gives it its power to save. Without Him we would all stand helpless and hopeless.

**3. Came into the world.** The fact that He came into the world necessarily implies His pre-existence. As John states it, "In the beginning was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1-3.) That same Word (Christ) became flesh. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and



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truth.” (John 1:14.) In becoming flesh, He left the riches of heaven for the poverty of earth. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9.) This simply means that though He was with God and was God, He took a body of flesh and became man. “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:6-8.) While in the form of men He lived a perfect life. “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” (1 Pet. 2:22.) Because of His perfect life and because He was God in the flesh, His death on the cross became an acceptable sacrifice for man’s sin debt. Thus Christ came into the world to open the way to heaven.

**4. To save sinners.** This embraces the fundamental mission of Christ, and it necessarily implies two things:

First, sinners are lost. To be lost is to be separated from God, separated from His fellowship and relationship (Isa. 59:1, 2). The lost state is one of the conditions called death in the Bible (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12; 6:23). When one sins he dies, and this death is eternal, eternal unless redemption occurs. Thus to be a sinner is to be lost; to be lost is death; to be dead in sin is to be lost eternally. When one is eternally lost, redemption by Christ is his only hope.

Second, Jesus came to save sinners. He made the plan of salvation necessary. Either Christ saves all sinners or else He saves only a certain qualified class of sinners. To say that He saves all would be to say that no one is or will be lost. But to say this would be to deny many passages of Scripture which plainly warn against and affirm the fact of eternal destruction — hell. Furthermore, it would remove the very foundation upon which the whole Bible is built. The story is the story of how God has made redemption possible to those who will accept Christ as Savior and obey Him as Lord. We must, therefore, conclude that

only a certain qualified class will be saved.

But who are those who will be saved and how does one become a part of that qualified class? To qualify for salvation one must believe in Christ as God’s Son (John 3:16; 8:24; Heb. 11:6), repent or turn away from all sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30), and be baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26, 27; 1 Pet. 3:21). Jesus stated this principle as follows: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16:16.) These acts of obedience *per se* do not save one, but they bring him to the point where the Lord has promised to save. The Lord does not save unbelievers. Thus one must believe. The Lord does not save the impenitent believer. Thus the believer must repent. The Lord has not promised to save the unbaptized penitent believer. This necessitates baptism for the penitent believer. According to the Scriptures, the Lord saves the believer who repents and is baptized. And those who wish to be saved must put themselves into this qualified class.

**5. Of whom I am chief.** This is not to be understood as a part of the faithful saying. It is the writers conclusion, showing the extent to which salvation is possible. Paul felt himself the chief of sinners, probably because he had prosecuted the church of God (1 Tim. 1:13), but mercy had been extended to him. There was, therefore, no reason to think that anyone would be excluded from the grace of God.

Because all have sinned (Rom. 3:9, 23; 5:12; Gal. 3:22), all stand in need of salvation. If one is not guilty of sin, death (separation from God) has not passed upon him and he is not lost; if he is not lost, he does not need salvation (Luke 5:23); if he does not need salvation, then he does not need Christ (Mark 2:17). Only sinners need to be saved. But since all responsible people have sinned, all are lost, and all need a Savior — all need Christ. No sinner can be saved without Him because the death of Christ is the only sacrifice that will pay the penalty of sin. His death makes it possible for the sinner to be forgiven — to live again!

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into



the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." When one recognizes the fact that he is lost and that Christ came into the world to save, he can then turn to Christ as Savior — he can accept Christ's death as his own sin debt and be free. But one cannot accept the death of Christ as his sin debt without accepting Christ as Lord. And to accept Christ as Lord is to submit to Him in full and complete obedience. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he

that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) The Lord has given the plan but He has left it up to us as to whether we will appropriate that plan or not. To accept Christ as Savior is to acknowledge the efficacy of His plan — to acknowledge that we must depend upon Him to make the payment of our sin debt; to accept Christ as Lord is to obey the plan — to acknowledge Him as the Lord of our lives. One cannot accept Christ as Saviour without accepting Him as Lord.

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## 1950 Years Ago

### Jim E. Waldron, Hong Kong

Christ's great spiritual empire, the kingdom of heaven, was founded in the year of our Lord 33 (C.E. 30) on the ancient feast day, Pentecost, in the month we call May about 1950 years ago. Its establishment was foretold by Jesus: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you. There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:11.) The future kingdomist, who maintains Christ's kingdom is yet future, runs square into the face of this plain Scripture. The kingdom of heaven was founded during the lifetime of Jesus' apostles; it could not have been founded after the first century.

The premillennialist (future kingdom advocates) who clutch at straws to save their theories and contend the transfiguration (Mark 9:2-13) fulfilled this statement are chasing the winds of unbelief for Jesus said some "shall in no wise taste of death till they see the kingdom" come. This meant some would not die, but it also meant some would. None standing by had tasted of death in the time lapse (only six days) between Jesus' prophecy (Mark 9:1) and the transfiguration (Mark 9:2), but we know two had tasted death by Pentecost, Christ and Judas.

This prophecy by Jesus has two important points which make it clear the kingdom of heaven was founded on Pentecost.

Remember Jesus said the kingdom would come in "the life time of some disciples and would come with power."

Now what power came in their life time? We read Luke 24:29, Jesus said, "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here the apostles were plainly told the power from on high would come when the Holy Spirit came.

On Pentecost, just ten days after Christ's ascension and just fifty days after his resurrection, power promised of the Father from on high came upon the apostles by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Now the kingdom did come in the lifetime of those disciples or Christ is a false prophet. Christ said they would not "taste of death" until they had seen the kingdom come with power. Christ is no false prophet because the kingdom came on Pentecost with power.

Now you can escape Satan's kingdom of darkness and be translated into the kingdom of heaven (Col. 1:13) by being added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:47) through faith in Jesus (John 8:24), repentance of your sins (Acts 26:20), and by being immersed in water for remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

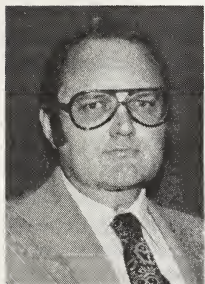




# Carolina Pulpit

Edited by  
Johnny Melton

## Biographical Sketch



**Wallace Beasley**

Wallace Beasley was born in Rockingham, N.C., on June 2, 1938. He lived there and in Statesville, N.C., for his first five years, and then moved with his family to Charlotte, N.C., where he lived until the age of 19, at which time he entered David Lipscomb College. After college,

Wallace served congregations in Troy, N.C.; Midland, Texas; Martinsville, Virginia; Laurel, Delaware; and presently he serves the Windsor Lake congregation in Columbia, S.C. Wallace and his wife, Betty Jo, of McMinnville, Tenn., have seven children.



## Sermon

# We Are Not Ignorant Of His Devices

**Wallace Beasley, Columbia, SC**

2 Cor. 2:11

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Paul said we know the devices Satan uses against us. The reason we know them is that God has revealed those devices in the Bible. One such case is Eve's temptation. The techniques Satan used then are the same he is using today.

### **DISCUSSION:**

I. First, Satan isn't going to leave us alone just as he didn't leave Eve alone. He didn't even leave heaven alone. If he had the gall to try to disrupt heaven, he certainly isn't going to leave us alone (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:7-9; 1 Pet. 5:8).

II. Excitably and very carefully, Satan planned the way to approach Eve. There must not be a slip up . . . he must not scare her away (Gen. 3:1). He wants to be appealing to us also (2 Cor. 11:14).

III. Softly, Satan must have reasoned with Eve . . . "Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He still likes to softly reason with us (2 Cor. 11:3), and the moment we start reasoning with Satan we are in trouble. God wants us to immediately tell him to "get thee hence."

(Matt. 4:10; 1 Thess. 5:22; James 4:7.)

IV. Satan offered Eve comfort in sin with the words, "Ye shall not die." (Gen. 3:4.) He offered the same to Christ in Matthew 4, and he offers us the same today (Heb. 11:25; 1 John 2:15-17).

V. Satan promised Eve liberation with . . . "Ye shall be as gods." (Gen. 3:4.) Our world is continually offered freedom by Satan in doing sinful things. Through the use of alcohol, drugs, immorality, etc., he has promised a carefree life to many. But, we know freedom is only in Christ (John 8:32; Rom. 6:16-23).

VI. Satan used the device of drawing Eve's attention from the paradise of Eden. He got her to thinking on the world of sin and its so-called benefits (Gen. 3:6). He used this tactic on Demas (2 Tim. 4:10). But we know we are to set our sights and affections on heaven (Col. 3:1-3).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Satan has found these devices often successful.

2. But, we are not ignorant of these devices; and we shall overcome them and be victorious (2 Cor. 2:11; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 John 5:1-5).

# Impossibility Thinkers

## Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23.)

Shammua  
Shaphat  
Igal  
Palti  
Gaddiel  
Gaddi  
Ammiel  
Sethur  
Nahbi  
Geuel

Do you recognize these fellas? At one point, they were mighty important men. They were chosen for a notable task. These are the ten men who accompanied Joshua and Caleb on the mission to spy out the land of Canaan.

While these men were "princes" in their tribes prior to that ill-fated expedition, they have been forgotten — even by good students of Bible history. And yet their companions, Joshua and Caleb, are well known

and their memories revered. Why?

The reason the ten spies have passed into "profound obscurity" is the "evil report" they brought back after spying out the land of Canaan. Their report was "evil" in the sight of God because it was a **negative** report. It was evil because it was **overly cautious**. It was evil because it smacked of **walking by sight** rather than walking by faith.

Today in the Lord's church, we have talented men, great men as far as ability goes; yet, like the ten spies of old, these men are often spreading a message of gloom and doom. Oh, how we need men like Joshua and Caleb! Men with real and abiding faith in God. Men who recognize the "giants" and "walled cities" of opposition, but who nonetheless know that all things are possible with God. Men who believe victory can be obtained because God has promised it.

God help us become "possibility thinkers" like Joshua and Caleb, rather than "impossibility thinkers" like the ten.

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## Poland Relief Effort

**Little Rock, Arkansas** — The response to the crisis facing our brethren in Poland has been nothing short of fantastic. It was reported by Bill McDonough, missionary to Germany, at the European Lectureship in August, that many Christians in Poland are facing a winter of starvation due to the social and political unrest in that country. Brother McDonough has since spearheaded a drive to take food to New Testament Christians in Poland with the Sixth and IZARD church in Little Rock, Arkansas, collecting funds to obtain provisions. Since this need was made known over \$1,000,000.00 has been raised for our needy Polish brethren. Brother McDonough has asked that no more money be sent for the present. On October 5, fifty truckloads of food went into Poland and there are plans to attempt another delivery in November. If more food is needed in the spring, another delivery will be made then. The response to the crisis was far beyond what anyone expected.

## Violence in Guatemala

Increasing violence and tension in Guatemala is making the work of mis-

sionaries there increasingly hazardous, forcing some of them to leave the field. In recent months Roy and Billie McCown were forced to return to the States permanently after more than eight years of work in Guatemala. Over the past two years several medical missionaries have been forced to leave that country because of threats of violence made against them. However, in spite of the increasing tension, the gospel of Christ continues to bear fruit in this Central American nation. In recent weeks 105 have been baptized into Christ, reports missionary E. Joe Lee.

## West African Campaign Successful

**Santa Maria, California** — During a June campaign, 1,349 people were baptized into Christ in the West African nations of Ghana and Nigeria. The campaign was conducted by 23 workers from America in conjunction with the brethren in Ghana and Nigeria. Most of those converted were World Bible School correspondent students. Campaigns have been conducted in the two countries since 1979 with significant increases in results each year. In 1979 there were 314 baptisms, 745 in 1980 and an increase of more than 600 for this year.

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# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### by David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC NORTH CAROLINA

**Roanoke Rapids.** Dan Williams is the new preacher for the Tri-City congregation. He is a 1976 graduate of Freed-Hardeman College. He is being supported by the church in Hopewell, Virginia.

**Monroe.** Roger Jones has moved to Monroe from Siler City.

**Woodleaf.** Charlie Harrison is the new preacher at Corinth. He was previously at Williamston, S.C.

**Charlotte.** A new Sunday morning attendance record was set on October 4 at the Westside church with 183 present.

**Cary.** Bill Pendergrass is no longer working with the Cary church. His new address is Route 1, Box A, Leoma, TN 38468.

**Winston-Salem.** The South Fork brethren report a successful booth at the recent Dixie Classic Fair.

**Statesville.** Tom Bolick will preach in a meeting at Abilene church beginning November 29.

**West Hickory.** Two additional deacons appointed are Don Wheeler and Mike Martin.

**Charlotte.** Bill Driscoll has moved from Wilmington to Providence Road to serve as associate minister.

### N.C. Baptisms

West Hickory, 3; Fayetteville, 5; Raleigh, 4; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 3; Boone, 4; Providence Road, Charlotte, 4; Burlington, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 3. Total: 28.

### Southport

CLYDE McCALL, Reporting: The church here is named the Brunswick County church of Christ. We are now meeting in a store front in Southport. The group has a lot for a church building almost paid for. This lot is located about three miles west of Southport on North Carolina State Route 211. Our goal has been set to build a

building in 1982. The church here has 24 members with 43 who attend worship from time to time.

Our mailing address is: Church of Christ, Clyde McCall, 205 Longview Drive, Southport, NC 28461; telephone 919-457-9131.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Rock Hill.** In May of 1980 a monthly Preachers' Workshop was begun in Rock Hill at the Charlotte Avenue congregation. This provides a full day of special classes and fellowship.

Since the beginning James Meadows has been a regular and effective teacher. He has given extensive instruction on a variety of subjects such as Ephesians, Premillennialism, and Mormonism. With his recent move to Memphis, Tennessee, regular participation must come to an end.

Thirty-seven were present on October 19 for brother Meadows last presentation. The group gave him a set of books as a token of appreciation.

The monthly workshops will continue with the next one scheduled for November 23. Several men will be involved in teaching at each session. For details contact David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730.

### S.C. Baptisms

Florence, 2; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 3; Essex Village, Charleston, 2; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 4; Myrtle Beach, 1; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 2. Total: 15.

### Palmetto Bible Camp

TIM THIGPEN, Reporting: The First Annual Fall Singing was held at Palmetto Bible Camp on Saturday, October 10th. With an attendance of over 175 people from North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and Texas, the Fall Singing was certainly a success by all standards. The period of fellowship and worship experienced has seldom been exceeded in the Carolinas. This singing is

scheduled to be an annual event in the fall months of the year, so everyone is encouraged to make plans to be at Palmetto Bible Camp next year for another great day of singing, fellowship, and praise.

## **Piedmont**

**DON STEVENS**, Reporting: I am a 1975 graduate of White's Ferry Road School of Preaching in West Monroe, Louisiana. I am a native of East Texas. My family and I moved to Greenville in August (1981) to work with the congregation meeting at Ray Road. The members here have made us feel very welcome to this area and encouraged by their attitudes and desires for growth. In the month of September so far we have had three baptisms.

## **Georgetown**

**DAVID FERNEYHOUGH**, Reporting: In November marks our first year with the church here in Georgetown. God has given us 14 baptisms and 65 responses for restoration and prayer. We sponsor the Ferrell family in New Zealand and the Barr family in Tennessee Bible College. The congregation here was started in the early 1950's and they are loving, kind, sincere, sound, and contend for that one faith (Jude 3). Our attendance averages 110. Our budget is \$995.00 per week.

## **Columbia, St. Andrews Rd.**

**R.W. SENN and BERNARD S. KEENE** (elders) Reporting: In view of the Crossroads philosophy in South Carolina and the capitol city, Columbia, we wish to have it known that:

We do not believe in, teach, practice or condone the cultic practices of the Crossroads church located in Gainesville, Florida. We have no part of any "ism" contrary to the Bible. We do not uphold the methods practiced by "Crossroadism" which have brought disunity to the churches in our state and across our land.

We advocate strongly the family unit, parent-child relationship, as taught in the Bible.

We advocate calling Bible things by Bible names and do not employ the terminology

of any "ism." We teach and practice New Testament Christianity.

If you plan to visit or to move to Columbia, we invite you to investigate any and all of our teachings and practices and to worship with us.

## **Greenville, Washington Ave.**

**BILL G. SMITH**, Reporting: A family has returned to us saying that "the rumors that had been circulated about Washington Avenue were not true" and they wanted to make things right with the Lord and Washington Avenue. We have broken all our attendance goals at all services during the last three weeks. Bible study 40, A.M. worship 50, P.M. worship 44, Wed. night 31. Nov. 15-18 are the dates for our Gospel Meeting with Terry Wheeler of Duncan, preaching. Another meeting with Bob Rigdon of Sylva, N.C., is scheduled for April 2-4, 1982. We have for free loan: 2 hospital beds, 4 wheelchairs, 2 walkers, 4 crutches, 2 canes, and surgical stockings.

Congregation in Laurens, S.C., seeking full-time experienced minister. Age preference approximately 28-42. Contact Keith Tripp (803) 575-2169 or Jim Bailey (803) 682-3922.

## **Record Enrollment at Tennessee Bible College**

One hundred and two students are enrolled for the fall quarter at Tennessee Bible College. Eighty-one students are studying in the undergraduate program, and twenty-one graduate students are working toward their M.A. or Ph.D. in Christian Doctrine and Apologetics.

The enrollment has increased in number each quarter, and this fall surpassed the one hundred mark for the first time in its three year history as a four-year college.

We are thankful for those who are supporting our efforts to train faithful men to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and request your prayers that we might faithfully fulfill our task.



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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

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Front row: Gerri Oser, Beulah Bowman, Freda Rhone, Pat Ray.  
Second row: J.C. Oser, Wayne Blackerby, Steve Rhone, David Ray.  
Third row: Jerry Egan, Maxie Sturgeon, Betty Dawson, Duffie Moore  
(See page 9)

# editorial

## JAMES MEADOWS

There are a few men in the world who it is an honor to honor because they seek no honor. James Meadows is one of them. He is a noble, hard-working, successful preacher of the ancient gospel who came to South Carolina about seven years ago unknown to most of us but left known and loved by nearly every Christian in the Carolinas. He has left his imprint in all our lives.

It came as a shock to most of us to learn that brother Meadows had resigned the work at Central in Spartanburg and would be leaving the Carolinas. He is a deeply loved man by all of us, and in all probability no one among us has ever made a contribution that would rank in the same category with his. His wide range of activities, his versatility in the kingdom, his extended influence for good, his love for the truth, his desire to see the church grow, his willingness to do anything or go any distance to aid the work or a worker, along with his unsurpassed knowledge of the Scriptures all combine to make him a unique and most useful man. While it would be impossible to list all his outstanding features and contributions, here are a few (in the order in which they come to mind rather than in the order of importance):

1. His incredible knowledge of the Bible and his rare ability to instantly recall any verse needed for any occasion or subject. We have never seen him in any situation but that he had an appropriate passage at his fingertips. He has committed more Bible to memory than anyone we have ever known, excepting perhaps Gus Nichols and Guy N. Woods. No one who has ever lived in the Carolinas comes anywhere near equaling his Biblical scholarship. One needs hear him speak only once to be totally convinced of this.

2. His unusual humility. Here is a truly great servant, humbly serving. In any situation he always conveys the idea by his demeanor that everyone present is far more worthy than he, when the exact reverse is

usually the case.

3. His respect for others, especially for preachers and elders. He respects both the person and his work. This has endeared him to scores of people, especially to young preachers.

4. His vast amount of work. No one knows how much work he does, but besides preaching, lecturing, and writing for many publications and books (he is the author of more than 30 books and writes the teenage quarterly for the **Gospel Advocate**) a constant stream of solid sound sermon outlines flows from him to aid others; each one is so extensive and so full of Scripture and other useful matter that it would take the average preacher many months to research and prepare just one. They come from him weekly.

5. Loyalty to the truth. Truth, as he sees it, is the guiding principle of his life . . . and should be of every life. Deception and compromise is contrary to his nature.

6. Concern and support for others. Here we add a personal word because we have been the recipients of this from him from the very day he moved to the Carolinas. Of course he has not always agreed with us but he has been sympathetic toward our weaknesses and supportive of our strengths. He has constantly encouraged us in the

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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direction we are trying to go. Nothing he could have done would have helped us more in difficult and discouraging days.

7. His effectiveness as a local preacher. He has a love affair with local preaching. He has mastered the art. Under his preaching the Central church in Spartanburg has grown rapidly, spiritually, financially, and numerically. It has also grown in stature among Carolina churches from a church practically unknown outside Spartanburg County to perhaps the best known church in South Carolina. It is now recognized everywhere as a church ready unto every good work.

Scores of things remain yet to be said, but space prohibits more here. We conclude by observing that his presence in the Carolinas has made a vast difference in all of us. His contribution in numerous spheres of the church's activity is immeasurable. This editor feels that to have known him personally and having had the opportunity to work closely with him and to have had his counsel on many matters and always the benefit of his vast knowledge of the Scriptures has been among the richest blessing of his life. Thank God James Meadows came to South Carolina and touched our lives with the power and beauty of the Savior's message in action. He demonstrates again what God can do with one man who loves Him and who will devote his life to His service!

Brother Meadows will now be spending most of his time in meetings, lectureships, and writing, areas in which his work is superior. For those who wish to stay in touch with him, or to contact him for some special work, his new address is: James L. Meadows, Box 41804, Memphis, TN 38104.

## **ABERDEEN**

Eleven years ago we preached in a meeting in Aberdeen, N.C. Recently it was our pleasure to return there to preach in both Sunday services at the beginning of a lecture type meeting, in which different speakers each night finished it out. This trip gave us an opportunity to observe what had taken place in more than a decade of work and worship in this small eastern North Carolina town. It was a thrilling experience

for us, but the excitement was tempered with some disappointments. We think our impressions might be worth sharing with you.

There were two disappointing aspects of the work:

1. Numerical growth. While it was clearly evident that a great deal of progress has been made, and while more native or local people are now members of the church, overall the church is only slightly stronger than it was eleven years ago. Like many Carolina churches, growth comes slow and it is gravely hindered by internal difficulties or minor problems, such as petty personality conflicts, difference in judgment, etc.

2. No full-time preacher. When we were there eleven years ago, the Billy Voss family was fully supported in the work. This is not true anymore. Billy still preaches for the church but he is forced to earn most of his livelihood in secular work, thus using up valuable time that could be spent in reaching lost souls with the saving gospel. And while the current arrangement seems to be working well for all concerned, it seems to us that it is a step backward.

But in spite of the disappointing features, there were many thrilling aspects of the work. We can take the space to mention only three, although more could be added:

1. A beautiful building large enough to meet both present and future needs. The church purchased a large building from a denominational group about 1972. It is an old building but has many years of service in it yet. It has a beautiful auditorium, a large fellowship room, office, and three or four times the number of classrooms now being used. The building is being remodeled as finances permit and as need requires.

2. A hunger for truth and right. We do not recall having preached at a place where the people seemed more eager to learn the truth . . . or where they impressed us as more willing to study to attain it. This speaks well of both the preaching and the Bible study program. People are not hungry for truth where they are not being taught to appreciate it. The truth is of such nature so as the more we have the more we hunger for — the more we attain the more our hunger increases.



3. The church is completely integrated. Eleven years ago there was not a black member of the church; now it is made up of nearly equal numbers of blacks and whites, a situation which we rarely see. But there is more: both work together as one, taking an active part in the work and worship as if no color barrier existed. It is thus not just a token integration: it is real, the way the Lord meant it to be.

We thus congratulate the Aberdeen church on its achievements and hope for it a bright and blessed future.

## THE BOUNDARY LINE

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)

A word study in this verse is both interesting and profitable.

"Whosoever" means anyone, everyone, regardless of who he is or what position he may hold, secular or religious. No one is so

high, or so low, as to be exempted from it.

"Transgresseth" here means going beyond (onward), overstepping, or crossing over. There are set limits and transgression means to go beyond or cross over the limits. When one transgresses the law, he becomes a law violator — he acts outside or beyond the law.

"Abideth not in" means to be outside of or go beyond. A child is told to stay in the yard. As long as he remains inside the yard he is within his limits. But if he leaves the yard and goes into the road, he has transgressed — he goes beyond his instructions.

"The doctrine of Christ" means the body of teaching delivered by Christ — the faith once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). The doctrine of Christ is the boundary line in which one must abide. It is the set limits for those who have God and His Son.

"Hath not God" means that one has neither the approval nor the fellowship of God. God's approval and fellowship are in the boundary line. Outside the boundary line, the doctrine of Christ, one is separated from God. And to be separated from God means to be lost (cf. Isa. 59:1,2). Thus outside the boundary line of the doctrine of Christ one does not have God, and when one does not have God he is lost, lost because he has gone beyond his limits.

The boundary line has been set by God, not by man. He who crosses over that line leaves the approval and fellowship of God. But "He that abideth in the doctrines of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

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# Follow-Up Thoughts On "Must We Divide"

Rubel Shelly, Nashville, TN

About one year ago in this same paper, I wrote an article bearing the title "Must We Divide?" It generated more response — more than 90% favorable — than any I have ever produced. Most of the persons who read it understood and appreciated its plea for the maintenance of unity in the body of Christ.

A few people have "raked me over the coals" for it and have labelled the article compromise, liberalism, and lack of love for the truth. Frankly, the vicious spirit of some of the articles and their misrepresentation of its contents have inclined me to think it pointless to respond to the criticisms.

Perhaps enough time has passed to offer some response to my critics. After all, they are my brethren. I want to make the matter clear enough to set their minds at ease and to make possible our mutual encouragement of one another in the work of Christ.

Here are some things which were not said in the article and which I do not believe. First, the article did not advance an "agnostic epistemology" and imply that it is impossible to know the truth about divorce and remarriage, premillennialism, or church cooperation. By careful study of the Word of God, one can know the truth on these and other matters of revelation to a certainty (cf. John 8:31-32; 1 Tim. 4:3). Second, the article did not say that division is never justified. The Bible says that we must refuse fellowship to certain individuals and classes of men (cf. 2 John 9-11; Rom. 16:17). Divorce is sometimes justified, but it is never desirable; God hates it (Mal. 2:16). Division of the body of Christ is sometimes justified, too, though never desirable; it should be avoided if at all possible, for it is hateful to God! Third, it did not belittle great men who had to fight past battles to protect the purity of the faith. Hardeman, Kurfees, Nichols, Harper, Warren, and others of their caliber entered controversy with love for the truth and not for personal vindication. Lesser

men went into the fray and complicated the task by confusing ego with love for the truth. The same phenomenon was witnessed in the first century (cf. Phil. 1:15).

Here is what the article did say — things which I still believe with my whole heart. First, the article pleaded for gentleness and forbearance with brothers I believe to be in error. That is Biblical counsel (Gal. 6:1). I will teach the truth, rebuke and speak against that which is false, and oppose the brother who is teaching error. But I will not sever fellowship until every possible effort has been made to allow truth to have its power to change and win back that brother! So long as he shows an honest willingness to search for the truth, I will search with him and try to achieve the true unity that comes of a common commitment to it and its author. When the truth is repudiated and/or behavior that is sinful is embraced wilfully, fellowship will be severed. Second, the article did ask for careful and honest study of the issues involved. Third, it urged all of us to separate emotions and egos from the larger concern for truth which must guide us in the handling of this problem.

We dare not "hide our heads in the sand" in the face of this or any other issue which threatens the church. But neither can we afford to deal with the issue in a spirit other than one which exhibits humility, patience, and love.

A lot of things have happened in the last year. The divorce-remarriage controversy does not appear to be as heated and threatening now as then. Diligent study is being done, and the power of truth is being given its time to work.

The question then was "Must We Divide?" With the perspective of a year, the answer seems more decisively to be a negative one. Humility, patience, and love are combining to create an atmosphere in which truth-loving brethren can "speak the same thing" and come to be "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.)

May it be so, Holy God!

# Peace In A Stormy World

Harmon Caldwell, Statesville, NC

It was the night before Jesus was slain. The Lord was about to embark upon that terrifying and incomprehensible voyage of suffering. His death for the sins of the world was imminent. In the quietness of that moment with His disciples in the upper room, as He taught them of love, warned them of the world, exhorted them and comforted them as they viewed the prospects of their lives without their precious Friend and Counsellor, telling them that though He was going away, He would send another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth to guide them and to teach them, He further stated, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.)

Peace. What a beautiful word. Jesus reflected what every person since the creation has realized: there can be no real peace in this world coming from things of the world; there is only tribulation. He taught that true peace is found only in Him. He gives us to understand that such comes through overcoming the world itself, and this is only in Him. The beautiful hymn which we frequently sing reflects this:

*Only in Thee, O Savior mine,  
Dwelleth my soul in Peace Divine,  
Peace that the world, tho' all combine,  
Never can take from me. . . .*

*Pleasures of earth, so seemingly sweet,  
Fail at the last my longings to meet;  
Only in Thee my bliss is complete,  
Only, dear Lord, in Thee!*

The apostle Paul often found himself in troubled waters, both literally and figuratively. Remembering his perilous experiences as he travelled on sea and land carrying the gospel to the pagan world, he reminded the Corinthians, "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep . . . in perils of rivers . . . in perils of the sea." In this storm-filled life, he constantly confronted privation, persecution, death itself.

The peace with which this great man

faced the storms of life could and should very well be an inspiration to us. When clouds persisted in overshadowing his path, and storms constantly threatened, he found it within himself, rather than to fret and be fearful, to trust implicitly in the ". . . Master of ocean and earth and skies," and with the peace of God which passeth understanding always ruling in his heart.

People everywhere today are troubled and perplexed on every side with anxiety over material things . . . and well they might for the spiraling inflation, cost of living. The circumstances of the age make for constant activity; time passes swiftly, and there are always so many, many things to do, people to see, places to go. We worry over so many matters that constantly confront us. Paul, however, found peace when he learned that in whatsoever state he found himself, therewith to be content. He faced temptation and trial even as us, and even sometimes yielded and sinned. Even then he wouldn't despair, for he had full trust and confidence in Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin, when such is repented of, and confessed. Even when he was confronted with bonds and affliction, persecuted, imprisoned — with profound peace, in realization that there is indeed refuge in Christ, Paul could say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself."

The Lord wishes us to have peace — peace of mind, soul; peace with our fellowman, and above all, peace with Him. This comes only through submission unto God, faithfulness to His cause, true fellowship with Christ.

Yes, there are problems in abundance, and sometimes even disaster enters our lives. But as Christians we can be at peace — and this peace in Him whose love and affection for us led Him to the cross, can produce a degree of happiness and blessedness and contentment in this life that could not possibly otherwise exist. Through the toils and sufferings and pain and unpleasanties and disillusionments with which we are constantly fraught, we can see beyond the veil



into reaches of eternity, which we can indeed spend with the Lord some sweet and blissful day. Let us prayerfully seek Peace,

and follow it, and through hope that comes from this, be moved to greater heights in the Master's service!

# Rediscovering The Bible

## Steve Gibson, Williston, SC

During the reign of King Josiah (640-609 B.C.), Judah rediscovered her Bible. Shaphan the scribe was sent to the temple to find money. But when he arrived, Hilkiah, the high priest, told him of a greater discovery. "I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord," he exclaimed. (2 Kings 22:8.)

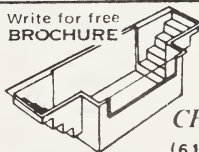
Hilkiah seems to have reclaimed the original covenant delivered by Moses (Deut. 31:26). The book had been captured by the Philistines, retaken by David, and placed in the temple of Solomon. Josiah "tore his robes" as the solemn terms of the ancient law were again read aloud (2 Kings 22:11, NIV).

Josiah began a religious reformation based on the newly discovered law-book. Because of his respect for God's covenant, Josiah was not afraid to condemn his ancestors or criticize religious traditions: "Great is the wrath of the Lord that is

kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book," he cried (2 Kings 22:13). Josiah then destroyed the idolatry which had sprung up and restored the true worship prescribed by Moses (2 Kings 23:19-23).

Like Josiah, many people in our day are rediscovering the Bible. There is a growing movement to restore New Covenant Christianity in the twentieth century. We know that it is our Lord's will to restore His original church (Matt. 28:19-20, 2 John 9, Jude 3). God calls on you and me to have the courage of Josiah and rediscover the Bible in our lifetime.

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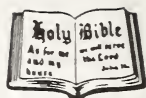
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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited by  
Johnny Melton



## Biographical Sketch



**Bill Young** is a native of Montgomery, Alabama. He has spent most of his preaching life in the Carolinas. He began preaching in 1966 at the encouragement of the late W.G. Gantt. He is married to the former Linda Porter of West Columbia, S.C., and they are the parents of two children: Porter (age 15) and Belinda (age 11). At the present he is the minister of the Gregg Avenue church of Christ in Florence, S.C., and a member of the board of directors of Palmetto Bible Camp.

## Sermon

### Why Are All Prayers Not Answered?

**Bill Young, Florence, S.C.**

#### I. INTRODUCTION

A. God teaches us to pray and He promises to hear and answer our prayers.

B. Why are so many prayers unanswered? (1) James 4:3, we must ask aright and not amiss. (2) In praying, we must meet the conditions. (3) God saves us on certain conditions and He answers prayer on certain conditions.

#### II. SOME CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER.

A. We must pray in faith. (1) James 1:6, 7, the man who does not pray in faith should not expect his prayer to be answered. (2) Matthew 21:22, we must pray believing that God will hear and answer.

B. We must pray in the name of Jesus. (1)

John 14:13, 14, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do." (2) Colossians 3:17, "Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (3) 1 Timothy 2:1, "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings," must be made in the name of Jesus Christ, if God is to be pleased and our prayers are to be answered.

C. We must be righteous. (1) God does not promise to answer just anyone's prayer, but He does promise to answer the prayer of the righteous, when the other conditions are met, cf. 1 Pet. 3:12. (2) Who are the righteous? 1 John 3:7, "He that doeth righteousness. . . ." What is "righteousness?" Let the Bible answer, Isa. 45:19. In order to be "righteous" we must do what God says for what He speaks is "righteousness" — that which is right. (3) Psalm 119:172, "All thy commandments are righteous." (4) 1 John 3:22, "Because we keep his commandments."

D. We must be at peace with the brethren. (1) No one is in a proper condition to go to God in prayer who does not endeavor to live in peace with the brethren, Matt. 5:23, 24. (2) There are many professed Christians who know that their brethren have something against them, and who continue to pray to God without even attempting to correct these matters. (3) Such prayers are not acceptable in God's sight and not answered.

E. We must pray according to His will. (1) We must respect God's will and way in all things. (2) 1 John 5:14, "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (3) Matthew 26:39, "Not my will, but thine be done." We must take Jesus' example and pattern our wills in harmony with the Father's will, not contrary to it.

F. We must have the spirit of forgiveness. (1) Unless we are always willing to forgive others we need not approach the "Throne of Grace" expecting God to hear and answer us. (2) Mark 11:25, "Forgive, if ye

have aught against anyone." (3) Matthew 6:15, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (4) This forever settles it. Unless we can forgive others we cannot be forgiven and cannot pray to God acceptably. (5) Many professed Christians seem unwilling to forgive others.

### III. CONCLUSION

A. The conditions to be met in order for God to hear and answer our prayers are: (1)

We must pray in faith. (2) We must pray in the name of Jesus. (3) We must be righteous. (4) We must be at peace with the brethren. (5) We must pray according to His will. (6) We must have the spirit of forgiveness.

B. If we meet these conditions God will be pleased to hear and answer our prayers.

C. David said, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Ps. 84:11.)

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## Campaign In West Jefferson

### Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC

On July 1, 1981, ten campaign workers arrived in West Jefferson, North Carolina (two more arrived the next day for a total of twelve), from the White's Ferry Road School of Preaching in West Monroe, Louisiana, to spend ten days in hard work and busy study with the church and the community. This turned out to be the most challenging, the most delightful, and the most successful effort I have ever been associated with in my thirty years of preaching. The impact made by the workers on the church and on everyone they met was nothing short of marvelous. The church in West Jefferson will never be the same again. We can give only a few of the highlights, but hopefully enough to encourage other churches to engage in such efforts.

The workers were: J.C. and Gerri Oser, David and Pat Ray, Steve and Freda Rhone, Maxie Sturgeon, Jerry Egon, Duffie Moore, Wayne Blackerby, Betty Dawson, and Beulah Bowman. (See picture on front cover.) All these did, in a fantastic way, the job they came to do, and each one endeared himself to the church and to the community in a very special way.

The preaching was done by J.C. Oser, a deacon in the White's Ferry Road church. He proclaimed the truth in a kind, considerate, compassionate manner. All could understand him, but because of his love for truth and souls, few could have taken offense to the truth he taught.

The church in West Jefferson had spent

many hours in praying for, planning, and making preparation for a great work. Consequently it was physically, psychologically, and spiritually ready to take on the work. When the plans were sent into operation they went like clockwork from start to finish. Every difficulty, problem, and need had been anticipated and taken care of in advance.

Our ladies (and the church here is made up of more than two-thirds ladies and teenagers) were a marvel to behold. They proved themselves to be as efficient as they were beautiful. We gave them (so very few in number) the monumental task of housing and feeding the workers. To add to their task, nearly all of them work outside the home. Four ladies were in charge (but every member of the church contributed in one way or another) and they did a superb job. They housed as many as three workers in their home, worked on a job, and successfully prepared food twice daily for as many as fifty people. My admiration for a group has never been higher.

The success of the campaign cannot be determined by the response alone. One would simply have to be in the church and see what happened to it, to each Christian, and to the community to know the whole story. However, there were nine precious souls who responded publicly: six for baptism and three for restoration. And while this number may look small to others, it must be remembered that they increased the size of the church by nearly one third.

The effects of the campaign continue in a



powerful way. Sometimes it is said that a campaign, even when some are baptized, leaves a church no stronger than it was to start with. But not so in West Jefferson. No one could see what has happened to the church here without concluding that the church is stronger in every conceivable way, numerically, financially, spiritually, morally, emotionally, and (perhaps most important of all), evangelistically. So much progress in such a short time has rarely been witnessed by churches in the Carolinas.

Perhaps the most far-reaching result of the campaign is the fact that Wayne Blackerby, one of the campaign workers, decided to move his family to West Jeffer-

son and devote his time to personal work, the teaching program, and to young people. He arrived here about the middle of August and has been busily engaged in the Master's business ever since. He is retired from the Army, was a student in the West Monroe School of Preaching, and has had years of experience in mission fields. He is an excellent preacher, teacher, and organizer. The church considers itself the most fortunate in the land to have him choose this as his field of labor. (As an indication of what is happening, we now have about a dozen home studies in progress and the potential for numerous more as time permits.)



## Mangled Metaphors

### Jack Rogers, Spartanburg, SC

God's word is rich with figurative language. All students of the Book realize this fact. We are familiar with such word pictures as the "land that flows with milk and honey," the "Son of righteousness," false prophets in "sheep's clothing," and the "whole armor of God," to name a few. Each of these figures described some literal person, place, thing, or concept. The figures help the hearer to understand what was being spoken. However, we can easily misapply the figures today, and get ourselves (and others) into trouble.

A figure that is often misapplied among our brethren, and with disastrous results, is the concept of "fruit-bearing." The idea of planting, cultivating, and harvesting fruits is called to mind by several illustrations in the New Testament. If this figure is used in one instance referring to soul-winning, can we safely assume that the figure refers to the same in every other instance? Some brethren think so!

One example of a metaphor used in reference to two different objects is the word "dogs." Jesus used it to describe the Gentiles in Mark 7:27. Paul warned of "dogs" in Philippians 3:2, but had reference to Judaizers! We mangle metaphors when we insist that they must always have the same application throughout the Bible. We force figures beyond their intended use when we

do so.

In the case of fruit-bearing (and other figures), each instance must be examined individually, in light of its context and other passages. It is true that the plentiful harvest of Matthew 9:37 refers to the scattered multitudes. The context points this out, and no Scripture conflicts with this understanding. But does bringing forth "much fruit" in John 15:5 refer to new disciples? Of course not! Jesus defined two of His terms in the same context. Therefore, we must apply His definitions. Jesus said He is the vine. The individual disciple is a branch. The branch (disciple) that abides in the vine (Jesus) brings forth much fruit. What did Jesus have in mind by the word "fruit"? Not new disciples, because they are branches! The fruit may refer to the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, but not to new Christians. Of course, when Christians do bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and obey the commands to teach the lost, then new Christians will be produced (when the word falls upon receptive hearts). But the Bible nowhere teaches that every one who abides in Christ will baptize people — it only requires that we teach them.

The figures of speech in God's word can be helpful and beautiful, or we can turn them into handicaps to the truth. We must be careful to understand and use them properly.

# The Inconsistencies Of Denominationalism

While there is no rational or Scriptural reason that denominationalism should exist, it has become a way of life for most religious people throughout the world and in their minds to question its right to claim one's devotion is little short of blasphemy. But people have accepted it not because it is spiritual in nature (which it decidedly is not) but because it is traditional and appeals to their worldly nature and selfish pride. It permits one to be or say just about anything he wishes to be or say and still find a religious group that will accept and promote his teaching. Each denominational group claims to be following the Bible but in the final analysis each decides for itself what it will believe and practice. This has gone on for hundreds of years and the condition seems to grow worse and worse and there is no hope of it getting better until the whole system is changed by a return to the word of God as the basis of all truth and right. We must confess (although we were reared and trained in denominationalism) that we are at absolute loss to see how any man with a smattering of Bible knowledge could believe in or defend the mass of confusion, inconsistencies, divisions, and downright contradictions which are not only abundant in denominationalism but are essential and integral constituents of its very nature. Denominationalism begets, bears, and breeds inconsistencies.

We long ago concluded that no man living could understand or harmonize denominational doctrine. Primarily it is the declaration of one thing and the practice of another. To illustrate this, consider the following examples:

1. While it preaches unity, it practices division. Most of its adherents freely admit (and even proclaim) that the Scriptures enjoin the unity of God's people (John 17:20, 21; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:4-6) and condemn division (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:10; 14:33; James 3:16). They even go so far at times as to deny that they are divided. J.B. Phillips says in the conclusion of his foreword to his translation of the New Testament:

"... My gratitude is evoked by the assurance that has grown within me that here in the New Testament, at the very heart and core of our faith, Christians are far more at one than their outward division would imply. From this unquestionable evidence of fundamental unity I derive not only great comfort but a great hope for the future." This simply sweeps division under the rug and denies that it exists, except in some unimportant outward forms. But that fundamental unity he speaks of consist of hundreds of different churches, wearing different names, having different organizations, believing different doctrines, and practicing different rules of faith and conduct. The fact is that the unquestionable evidence show that division is in every fundamental aspect of denominationalism.

2. Denominational people usually say that one church is just as good as another, but no one really believes it for they turn right around and say out of the other side of their mouth: "While one church is just as good as another, this particular denomination (of which the speaker is a member) is superior to all others because it is the New Testament church." While their preaching says that one is as good as another, their actual practice says that one is better than all others.

3. Charles Spurgeon, one of the most successful preachers of all time, as far as his ability to preach a sermon and appeal to people is concerned, believed in and strongly taught that all men are predestinated by God, long before anyone was born into this world, either to be saved or to be lost. The number of the saved (and lost) is so fixed and certain that not a single one can be added to it or subtracted from it. Nothing one can be, do, say, feel, believe, or think can change his destiny. Each person's fate has already been sealed by an unalterable decree, from all eternity to all eternity. The salvation of each individual was thus a decision of God, made long before he was born and there is absolutely no way his destiny can be changed. Thus if God predestinated

one to be saved, he **will** be saved; if he is predestinated to be lost, he **will** be lost. There is no way that the eternal decree of God can be changed. According to Spurgeon, everyone is already saved or lost and there is absolutely nothing he can do about it. Yet Spurgeon would make some of the most heart rendering appeals of all time for his hearers to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, trust in His saving power, that they might escape everlasting punishment. He would say in essence that if one did not believe the gospel, trust in Christ as Savior, and turn from his evil ways that his soul was in danger of being lost in hell. Thus he preached that their destiny had already been sealed by a divine decree, but pleaded with them to act so as to change their destiny. We say again that no man living can harmonize or even understand such inconsistencies.

4. William Evans, in a great book (despite its glaring inconsistencies in places), called **The Great Doctrine of the Bible**, advocates the concept that repentance is a gift of God (and there is no question but that the right to repent is a gift of God), not something that man can do. He says, "Repentance is not something which one can originate within himself, or can pump up within himself as one would pump water out of a well. It is a divine gift." But he also teaches that one must repent or

perish. This creates a problem for him. How can a man be commanded to repent, and condemned for not doing so, when he cannot repent? In trying to harmonize this inconsistency (which no rational man acting rationally can do) he says, "How then is man responsible for not having it (repentance)? We are called upon to repent in order that we may feel our own inability to do so, and consequently be thrown upon God and petition Him to perform this work of grace in our hearts." From this we learn that one cannot himself repent — it is not an act of man. Repentance is a gift of God, something done for man by God. But still man is commanded to repent — that is, he must repent of his inability to repent before God gives him repentance! The man does not live who can make sense out of that. Yet it is absolutely necessary to sustain denominational doctrine.

We conclude that a doctrine which cannot be maintained and sustained rationally is not a rational doctrine . . . and if not a rational doctrine is certainly not a Bible doctrine. The Bible is consistent in all its teaching, and, in all essential matters, is easy to understand. So we have a choice: the beauty and consistency of the Scriptures or the confusion and inconsistencies of denominationalism. We have made our choice. Have you?



## What Is The Authority In Christianity?

John Waddey, Knoxville, TN

A kingdom that does not have an established code of law and authority cannot long exist. A kingdom whose subjects refuse to submit to the established authority will collapse. A kingdom whose subjects are divided in their allegiance to many conflicting sources of authority is doomed to failure. All concede these points, yet look at the confusion as to "what constitutes the established law and authority in Christianity." People are trying to serve God, when they have not learned just what is the authority in the church.

I. Some theories of authority.

A. The Catholic theory is the church with

its pope has the authority to legislate and interpret the law. But note the many changes; the conflicts within that church; different decisions on the same problems by various leaders. History demonstrates that all churches are composed of fallible and often sinful men. "Christ is the head of the church" (Eph. 1:22), and He has not surrendered this to anyone!

B. The church creeds are looked upon as authority; yet they have to be revised every few years.

C. Traditions from the past are revered as authoritative; but "Ye have made void the word of God by your traditions . . . in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15:8-9.)



D. The founding fathers of the sect may have the authority, but we should realize that their teachings are responsible for the confusion in Christianity today.

E. Human reason as authority is one of the prevalent concepts in the Protestant world. "... My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8-9.) Reason subjected to the revelation of God is man's most valuable asset. When it is exalted beyond its proper realm, it is the cause of his alienation.

F. Conscience is the authority of many. Solomon said, "There is a way that seemeth right to a man but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 16:25.) The conscience must be trained in truth before it can safely lead us, and "God's word is truth." (John 17:17.)

II. The question is then: **Where did God place the authority in Christianity?**

A. **All authority** has been given unto Jesus! (Matt. 28:18). God highly exalted Jesus, "That in his name every knee should bow." (Phil. 2:9-10.) The words that Jesus spake, the same shall judge us in the last day (John 12:47-48).

B. Jesus delegated His authority to His apostles saying, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19-20.) Their writings, our New Testament, is the only authority. Thus, those who seek to please God speak and act **only as the Bible authorizes**. "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.) The early church "continued steadfastly in the apostles teaching." (Acts 2:12.) "Whosoever abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)

The Bible only is the authority for Christ's church today. A group that refuses to give full respect to Christ's word is not His church!

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# Humanity's Triumph In Christ

## Part I

**Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC**

Having proved the New Covenant superior to the Old Covenant, and that Christ is superior to the angels, the inspired writer of Hebrews now moves forward to argue that the blessing promised to man through the Seed of Abraham is, at last, fulfilled in Christ, through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension! Having dealt, in the first chapter, with the superiority of Jesus to the angels, the writer, in the second chapter of Hebrews, refers to the fellowship of Christ and man. A fellowship of salvation for man, in and through Jesus Christ, man's Mediator, High Priest, and King of so great salvation. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2), the writer asks the inspired question of (Heb. 2:3-4), "How shall

we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?"

By faith in God, Abraham, according to (Heb. 11:10), "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Then, when God spoke to man through Moses, the levitical sacrificial system spoke of redemption and pointed to Christ, the Lamb of God and the Seed of Abraham. Therefore, in these "last days" the kingdom of Christ has to do with the question of redemption and man's need to be reconciled to God, the Great Salvation, even as the apostle Paul reveals in 2 Cor. 5:17-21: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become

new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Here is humanity's triumph in Christ, man's reconciliation back to God, our Creator! How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? For the phrase, "the world to come, whereof we speak" (Heb. 2:5), is not some distant age, but is the present age in which we live, for the writer has been showing the superiority of Christ over the angels, and therefore the Jews could know that the New Covenant was also superior to the Old Covenant, for Christ is God's Son and is superior to the angels. Furthermore, the subjection of this present age, "the world to come, whereof we speak" (Heb. 2:5), was not "unto the angels," but according to Psalm 8:6, God hast put all things under man's feet! In fact Hebrews 2:6-8 is a quotation from Psalm 8:4-6. The world to come (Heb. 2:5) is the present Messianic Age, or "these last days" when God has "spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:2). It was not unto angels that God did subject this present inhabited earth, but "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.) Not only is it revealed here that the Son was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, but also we are brought face to face with the great wonder and mystery and majesty of God's divine purpose for His Son! God's Son, who, by virtue of His being and His nature, and His absolute divine sovereignty of deity is higher than the angels, yet for a little while, made lower than the angels for the suffering of death.

This descent of God's Son to a position

lower than the angels is dealt with by the writer, first, by a reference to His human nature. The reference is made in Hebrews 2:6-8, which begins, "But one in a certain place testified, saying . . .," and consists of a quotation from Psalm 8:4-6, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatever passeth through the paths of the seas." With this quotation, the writer intends to show the dignity of human nature, yet he immediately, in the last part (Heb. 2:8) declares the failure of humanity with these words: "For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." In that statement the word "him" refers to man!

Let us pause, therefore, to consider this revelation of the dignity of man in itself. For, even though the Hebrew writer does not record the words, the Psalmist began with "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Ps. 8:3.) The Psalmist, you see, in asking these questions, was conscious first of the apparent insignificance of man in the presence of the wonders of all the universe, but he was also conscious of something in man which set him on a higher level than anything to be found amid all of those great wonders of the universe. The thought apparently filling the Psalmist's mind was concerned with the mysterious majesty of man. Therefore, out of a personal consciousness, it seems, he found himself, by comparison, insignificant amid the splendors of the universe, and yet, at the same time, was conscious that "God was mindful of him and visited him." Then, still referring to man, the inspired Psalmist declared that he was made (for a little while) lower than the angels! Man was seen then as lower than the angels, in rank,

but only for a little while, and the clear implication of the Psalmist is that in the divine purpose of God for man, ultimately, God

intends for man to be lifted into a position higher than the angels!

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## Part II

As to the Psalmist's declaration that man was made lower than the angels, in rank, but only for a little while, and the clear implication of the Psalmist that in the divine purpose of God for man, ultimately, God intends for man to be lifted into a position higher than the angels, let me say this: I certainly agree that this is a higher or greater conception of human nature than most people have ever realized. In fact, it may be said that one phase of the terrible sin sickness from which humanity suffers is that man thinks of himself as having much less dignity than what God has given him! It is this dignity according to the divine purpose of God, who made man in His own image, which fits man, who is made in the image of God for the ultimate or final dominion, even as Psalm 8:6 reveals: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Or as quoted in the New Testament, "And didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet, For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2:7, 8.)

In order that man might realize the meaning of or the purpose of being made in the image of God, our Creator has placed man on the level of disciplinary probation! The ultimate, final, or eternal realization of man's reason for existence in God's divine purpose, has always been, even as the inspired Psalmist has inferred in Psalm 8:6, "Thou hast put all things under his feet," and as it is quoted in Hebrews 2:8, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." All that God made God put in subjection under man! God has always intended for man to be lifted into an eternal position higher than the angels!

And, as we survey human history, we see two things that are clearly marked. One is man's failure to realize and failure to exercise completely this God-given power of dominion. The other thing clearly seen is

the slow but constant movement towards victory in this God-given power of dominion, by obedience to God, through His Son, Jesus Christ. Yes, man's dominion has been growingly extended over the earth, over the sea, over the air, and even over space. As someone has said so truthfully: "Man has learned to master everything, except himself!" The failure of man is recognized then by the inspired writer of Hebrews, when he says, "But now we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2:8.) The reason of this failure of man, as the whole inspired Bible reveals and emphasizes, is man's failure to obey God, not only in regard to the Old Covenant under Moses, but also the New Covenant under Christ, the Son of God. So all this leads to the writer's introduction of the word, Jesus, as he declares that while it is true that we see, not yet, all things subjected to man, "But we see Jesus." In this way, therefore, he draws attention to this **One**, Jesus Christ, at the center of human history, linked with humanity that has failed, yet standing apart from it! This **One** whom he speaks of as **Lord** is now referred to as **Jesus**, and is declared to be **One** made (for a little while) lower than the angels. And "that" in the first instance means that Jesus has passed the angels and touched our level. If, however, we stop there, we fall short of understanding the final or ultimate value of Jesus touching our level of humanity. Continuing reading, therefore, we find the reason for Jesus becoming lower than the angels, "For [because of] the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.) It is very clearly revealed, therefore, that the ultimate and divine purpose of the incarnation was not that of the revelation of a mere ideal! The Son of God was made lower than the angels, descending to the level of human nature, in order that He might die. From death angels are exempt, therefore Christ passed them by, coming to the level of fail-



ing humanity, made lower than the angels that He "should taste death for every man."

In connection with the terms in which the writer speaks of this fact, however, were it not the word of inspiration, we should never have dared to imagine it! For, while declaring that the Son was made lower than the angels because of the suffering of death, and, that the intention of the descent was that He should die, he speaks of the whole thing as a coronation, saying that Christ was crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God, He should taste death for every man. The statement is not that Jesus was crowned with glory and honour because He tasted death, but rather that He was crowned with glory and honour in order that He might taste death for every man! The amazing revelation of this declaration is that God conferred upon His Son, His eternal Son, a crown of glory, when He gave His Son, even unto death, for the ransom of all mankind!

Therefore, in being made lower than the angels for a little while, Christ came into identification with man, not only in the essential ideal of his nature, but also in all the suffering and the temptation of sin,

which had been the result of man's failure. It is in this connection that the writer says, "For it became God . . . to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." (Heb. 2:10-13.) Verse twelve here is a quotation from Psalm 22:22, and the twenty-second Psalm begins with the cry which was spoken by Christ from His cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46.) As divine inspired prophecy, written centuries before the fact, the twenty-second Psalm portrays a more vivid word picture of Christ's death on the cross than anyone can write today, even with all the history of 1900 years at our fingertips! In fact, the crucifixion of Christ fulfilled, to the very letter, all the inspired prophecies which had foretold it.

Therefore, God has "spoken to man in these last days through His Son" (Heb. 1:2), who is higher than the angels. God has spoken through Christ, because He descended to the human level and passed through the bitterness of physical death, willfully, the final surrender of obedience to God's will; in order that He Himself might then ascend to His place higher than the angels, thereby making a way for man's reconciliation back to God in Christ, man also can be lifted higher than the angels!

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted" (Heb. 2:18), "Christ is able to succour them that are tempted." "God was in Christ reconciling the world himself." (2 Cor. 5:19.) God hath made Christ to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we (you and I) might be made the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:21.) Therefore, since we can be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26, 27), then, by putting on Christ in baptism, in obedience to the gospel of Christ, one will, if he remain faithful till the end, along with Christ, be made higher than the angels even as God had purposed before the world was.



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# Carolina Church News

## News Briefs

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S.C. 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Mooreville.** Mike Mobley is the new preacher. The Mobleys were previously in Salem, West Virginia.

**Yadkinville.** George Ridings, an elder since the beginning of the congregation, died recently.

**Lexington.** Clifford Shaver, formerly at Warner's Chapel, is the new minister.

**Cherokee.** The following report was forwarded to us by Stanley Crews. "The campaign in Cherokee, North Carolina, was an enormous success. We were richly blessed by being able to join David Underwood, teacher at International Bible College, and a former missionary to Africa, and seven other students on this campaign. There were between 200 and 300 doors knocked that week. The rugged terrain makes it difficult to move fast in that effort. Twenty-nine studies were held, there were six baptisms, and five were restored to their first love."

### N.C. Baptisms

Raleigh, 3; Westside, Charlotte, 1; Northview, Statesville, 1; Burlington, 2; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 1; Salisbury, 3; Elizabeth City, 1; Wilkesboro, 6; Fayetteville, 2; Cherokee, 6. Total: 26.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**Spartanburg.** The new preacher at Central is Max Safely. The Safelys moved from Arkansas. James Meadows new address is P.O. Box 41804, Memphis, TN 38104.

**Greenville.** The Northeast church had a special contribution on November 1 for the building fund. The total of gifts and pledges was \$49,378.65. This was in addition to a regular contribution of \$2,168.00. Attendance was 176.

**Columbia.** About 30 people attended the first area preachers' meeting at the St. Andrews Road building on November 16. The guest speaker was Malcolm Hill, President of Tennessee Bible College. A monthly preachers' meeting is also being held in the Greenville area.

### S.C. Baptisms

Greer, 1; Union, 1; Essex Village, Charleston, 3; Myrtle Beach, 2; Duncan, 1; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 3; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 2. Total: 13.

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## Editorial Book Views

**Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes**, Thomas B. Warren; National Christian Press, P.O. Box 1001, Jonesboro, Ark. 72401; 204 pages, paper \$6.95.

Two things attest to the value of this book: first, the author, one of the most outstanding writers in the 20th century (Roy Deaver accurately describes him in the foreword as a "thinking machine"). Secondly, the fact that it is in its third printing. The book consist of five lectures delivered by the author in 1957 in Grand Prairie, Texas, at the very height of the controversy

with which it deals. The lecture titles sum up the contents: 1. Two Fundamental Problems: Liberalism and Anti-ism (the author makes the following appeal in the preface: "I appeal to brethren everywhere to recognize the seriousness of having 'liberal' and 'anti' movements among us. It is virtually important that we be alert to 'liberal' movements among us. But, at the same time, we must not allow ourselves to react to the opposite extreme of 'anti-ism.' Such movements have a strangling effect upon the churches.") 2. Affirmative on Church

Cooperation. 3. Objections to Church Cooperation — Considered and Refuted (15 objections are stated and answered). 4. Affirmative on Orphan Homes. 5. Objections to Orphan Homes — Considered and Refuted (17 arguments are brought together and refuted by Scriptural principles). The issues involved in congregational cooperation and church support of orphan homes are clearly defined and ably discussed. This reviewer has long felt (we obtained a used copy of it several years ago) that it is the most practical and reasonable book to come out of the controversies with which it deals. No one who wants a clear concept of the issues involved can afford to be without it.

**The English Bible — From KJV to NIV, A History and Evaluation**, Jack P. Lewis, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506; 408 pages, cloth \$16.95.

Now and then a book comes along that is of such a challenging nature that we would do ourselves a terrible injustice to ignore it. We think this is just such a book. While no one is likely to agree with each minute conclusion, statement of judgment, expressed conjecture or opinion, and some not with its major thrust, few if any can read it without learning from it the immense problems of translating the Bible into understandable English . . . and most will come to a deeper appreciation of the efforts to supply the word of God in a form so as to be understood by all English-speaking people. While most of us have a favorite translation, we should be open-minded enough to see both the strength and weakness of each version (no translation is perfect — textual difficulties make perfection all but impossible, even if there were no other problems). We should make as much preparation as it is possible in our position to be able to accept the former and reject the latter. Dr. Lewis, a recognized scholar in this field, by discussing the history, text, style, peculiarities,

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theological stance, form, consistency, notes — in fact every aspect pertaining to each particular translation, makes it possible for each of us, at least to some degree, to have a better perspective in judging their value. He discusses separately each translation from the KJV to the NIV (with an added chapter on the New King James Bible — NT now available and the whole Bible expected in 1982), giving a variety of useful facts, insights, judgments, etc. Commendable achievements as well as the faults and shortcomings are equally discussed, with as much objectivity as could be expected in most cases. Added to its other values, a bibliography of the English Bible Translation covers more than 40 pages.

The author concludes with a statement we must grapple with: "If one should ask if there are too many translations, the reply must be that the question is really irrelevant; and they must be dealt with. To hide one's head in the sand will not

make the translations disappear; it will not bring back the so-called 'good old days' when everyone read one translation. As long as there is financial gain in it, publishers will push translations, old and new." In our judgment, the best solution to the problem is for each one to be informed: and this book, while it may infuriate our conservative stance toward the KJV and ASV, will certainly inform us about things we need to know in the version issue.

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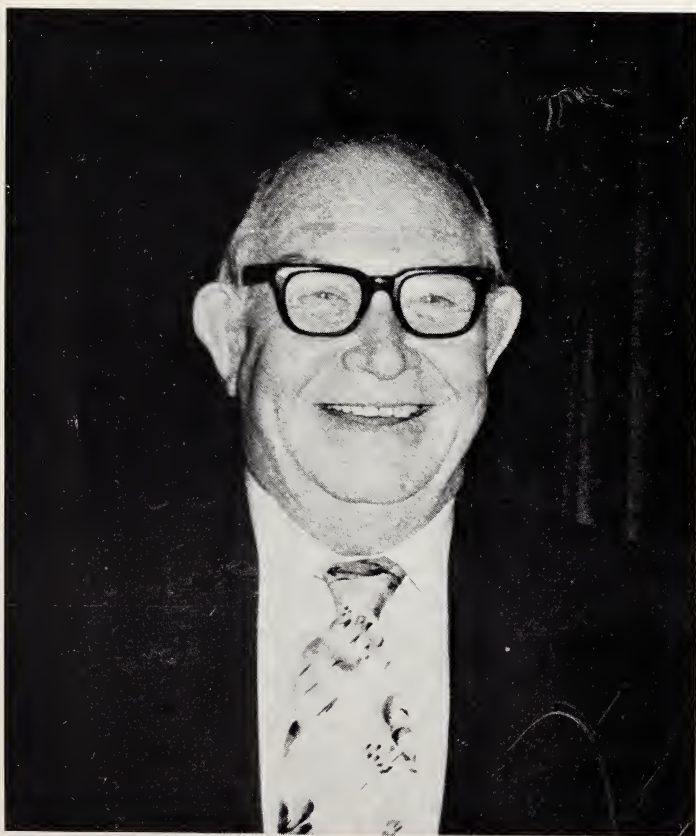
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 1, JANUARY 1982



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C292

**L. E. Holder — 1915-1981**  
(See Page 13)



# editorial

## THE LORD'S ORDERS

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way." (Ps. 37:23.)

This is just another way of saying that when the Lord speaks, a good man obeys. When a good man follows the orders of the Lord, he is walking in the Lord's way. God did not give His word just to be talked about or used as texts for sermons. He gave it as a practical guide to life and godliness. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:3, 4; cf. Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8, 9.)

God reveals many things to us in His word. For example:

1. We are the offspring (creation) of God (Gen. 1:26).
2. We have sinned and fallen from God's favor (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12).
3. We are lost because of sin (Rom. 6:23).
4. Jesus died to save the lost (Eph. 1:7).
5. The blood of Christ is the ransom price of sin (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).
6. The sinner must accept Christ as Savior and obey Him as Lord in order to be saved (Matt. 1:21; Luke 6:46).
7. God has a plan whereby He saves sinners — that is, He has given orders for them to follow (Acts 2:36-38).
8. God does not save apart from His plan (Matt. 7:22, 23).
9. The plan of salvation is given in the Scriptures.
10. Those who follow the Scriptures are following God's plan.
11. Only those who follow the plan (the Scriptures) or orders of God are saved. All others are lost.
12. Therefore those who have their steps ordered by God and who delight in His way must follow the Scriptures.

This makes it as certain as anything can be that when one does that which the Scriptures do not teach or authorize (such as sprinkling for baptism, use of instrumental music in Christian worship, substitute the mass for the Lord's supper, etc.), he is not being directed by the Lord and he is not walking in His way. If he is not walking in the Lord's way (following the Lord's orders), he must be walking in some other way — a way unknown to the word of God. The way of God is revealed in His word. No other way is (whether it be classed as work or worship).

## THE UNITY OF MARRIAGE

According to our good friend Lowell Altizer, writing in the Collinsville, Virginia, church bulletin, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., made the following statement in a sermon preached on September 9, 1979. It contains so much wisdom in so few words that we want to share it with our readers, especially those who are not married.

"Young people, listen to me for about two minutes. True marriage is not an experiment, nor is it a mere physical attraction. It is a union of minds, and affinity of hearts. So the toils of time and the beauty of youth may fade from the cheek and the

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Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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gleam of lustre from the eye, but if the minds are united and the hearts are wedded, every wrinkle in the face is a beauty spot and every furrow an ornament as we travel the pathway of life into its golden days."

Where there is union such as is here described, it grows deeper and sweeter with each passing year. "The tie that binds" increases their dependence upon each other. Their minds think as one. Their hearts beat as one. Their lives are lived as one. God bound them together in a holy union which makes separation and divorce unthinkable. They are as much a part of each other (as dependent on each other) as the heart, the eye, the ear, the hand, the foot, etc., is a part of the body. Breaking the union is as inconceivable as cutting out the heart or putting out the eye. "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." (Matt. 19:6.) "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." (Eph. 5:28, 29.)

## HAPPY SORROW!

Few things can be harder to live with than a violated conscience. But what a blessing it is to have a conscience that can still be violated. There are but few things for which one should be more grateful. The fact that one feels compunction means that he has not gone beyond the vale of hope. He can still recognize and be sorry for sins. And being sorry for them he may repent, seek forgiveness, and change his whole course of living. But all are not so fortunate. Some have so long ignored their conscience by continuing in sin that it no longer plagues them when violated. Its voice is stilled. It is "seared as with a hot iron." (1 Tim. 4:2.) This means that it is no longer active — it does not recognize sin as sin. It neither warns when violated nor praises with approval. It sees no difference in the Golden Rule and selfishness. The honor and dishonor of God are both one. In short, it is beyond feeling, not distinguishing between right and wrong.

Sam Jones tells of an old preacher who got down on his knees and prayed for others and then concluded his prayer by

saying, "God, now bless me. I have been a great sinner, but I am sorry for it and glad I am sorry." There is great wisdom here . . . and a blessed conscience. It is a happy, blissful, rewarding sorrow when one can be sorry for his sins and be happy about it. It puts into practice what Jesus meant when He said, "Blessed [happy] are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." (Matt. 5:4.) Thus a man should be happy, extremely happy, when he can mourn for his sins.

## PREACHING

Preaching (in one form or another) is an absolute necessity if the world is to ever come to a saving knowledge of the truth. But there cannot be preaching without preachers, and preachers, like everyone else, grow old and die. If the work is to continue, new ones must be constantly encouraged and trained to take their place. But probably the beginning of no calling is fraught with more hazards than that of preaching. In general people want to hear great preachers and great preaching, and they are impatient when they are not up to the high standards set for them. But very few, if any, preachers make a great start. Their first efforts are usually extremely poor, something next to nothing by any standard of public speaking. Yet this is the very time when they need the most encouragement, and if they do not get it they may give up before they really get started. Thus good people must look for and encourage every spark of talent that may appear in the first efforts of potential preachers. They must be made to feel that their efforts are appreciated, that the church is behind them as long as they preach the truth, and that it takes much time, patience, effort, and study to develop into a useful and efficient minister of the gospel. Their acceptance or rejection in the early days may well determine their success or failure. For this reason, listeners play a vital part in the making of preachers.

In the final analysis, however, the success of a preacher depends upon his own attitude and the strength of the intercompulsion to preach (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16) against all odds and often against the advice of those

he should ordinarily heed. Talbert Fanning is a good example of this. He was one of the most powerful preachers and teachers of the restoration plea in the early days of the movement in Tennessee. He probably influenced the thinking of more people in the church in the south than any other man (he was the teacher of David Lipscomb, and Lipscomb following in the footsteps of his teacher, did more to save the church from innovations than it is now possible for us to realize). His influence is still strongly felt wherever the restoration plea is known, even though he has been dead over a 100 years. Here was a man of strength, power, conviction, and leadership whose preaching ultimately reached and changed thousands, perhaps millions. Yet he had a most discouraging beginning. He was unusually tall (6 feet and 6 inches) and, living in the pioneer days, he wore homemade clothing, which rarely or never fit, at least the arms and legs were never long enough. After hearing him preach one day an old sister with a salty tongue blurted out to him: "Brother Fanning, you never can preach, and will always run your legs too far through your breeches. Do go home and go to plowing." Thank God, Fanning did not heed her advice! And thank God others have persevered in the face of equal odds, discouragement, and disheartenment. This is why we have great preachers and great preaching in the world today.

## **DELIGHTFUL AND EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES**

Christianity is a religion of faith, but that faith is based upon reason rather than emotions. The Lord has never demanded anyone to believe or practice anything contrary to rationality. Peter exhorted, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Pet. 3:15.) Thus our faith is based upon sound and logical reason. We believe in God, in Christ, in the inspiration of the Scriptures, the incarnation, perfect life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, etc., but we believe in them because the evidences are available to adequately support each one

and not because we have had some kind of physical experience.

But many religious people abandon reason and prove (?) their faith by their subjective feelings, such as excitement, emotional experiences, or unexplained phenomena. In their case, one proves that he is saved because he has had some kind of unusual feeling, such as feeling good, getting excited, or experiencing some kind of an emotional high. They call this a "know-so salvation." Some say that they know God is working with them or is near to them because the whole atmosphere around them is charged with excitement. They thus equate salvation or being near to God with delightful experiences. They say they know they are saved and that God is with them because they feel good. Their proof therefore lies in emotionalism, not in sound reason or Scriptural teaching.

In our plea to restore the ancient order of things, to base our faith upon a "thus saith the Lord" rather than in unreliable experiences, we have swung so far in opposing feelings as an evidence of pardon or the nearness of God that we have crushed all expressions of delight which might legitimately be the results of a living vigorous faith. This too is wrong. While excitement and emotional experiences are not evidence of pardon, they most certainly can be a fruit of it. We do not know that we are saved because we feel good but we should feel good because we know we are saved. We do not know that we are near to God because of a feeling of excitement, but we should have feelings of excitement because we know that we are near to God. There is, therefore, nothing wrong in feeling good. Actually we should feel good about the facts that we have believed and obeyed the truth, thereby becoming children of God, and as a result are on our way to heaven. Every Christian ought to be happy and excited because he has sound Scriptural reason to substantiate his relationship with Christ the Lord. Feelings should thus be viewed as a result, not the evidence, of pardon and a close relationship with God. Feeling good, excited, or delightful is not wrong within itself. In fact it is commendable when properly motivated.





# Here's The Answer

Howard Winters

To  
Questions  
You've  
Asked

Bude H. Little, of Pontiac, Michigan, writes: "I would appreciate you discussing in an editorial the role of or function in a Christian's prayer — 1. Christ Jesus; 2. The Holy Spirit. We enjoy **Carolina Christian**. Thanks."

With no more than this to go on it is difficult to know the precise areas in which help is sought. We are glad to be able to make an effort at replying, and if we miss the request altogether we invite the writer to run it through again with a few more specifics. We will divide the discussion into two parts:

1. The role of Christ in a Christian's prayer. While certainly not exhaustive, this can be summed up fairly well in three grand Biblical concepts: Christ as our example, Christ as the authority, and Christ as the Intercessor or Mediator.

First, Christ as our example. Jesus taught His disciples to pray (e.g., Matt. 5:44; 6:9-13; 9:38; 24:20), but better still He demonstrated prayer to them. He prayed often and evidently on all important occasions and before every vital decision and action. A few examples will be sufficient: He went up into a mountain where He could be alone to pray (Matt. 14:23). He rose up early and went to pray in a solitary place (Mark 1:35). As His fame increased (and His work load grew heavier), He withdrew Himself into the wilderness to pray (5:16). As He prayed His countenance was altered in the transfiguration (Luke 9:29). On at least one occasion He continued in prayer all night (Luke 6:12). One of His prayers is recorded in John 17. And then there is the prayer of terrifying agony in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:26-45; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46) and the one from Calvary's cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.) The life of Jesus was a life of prayer, and no one could follow His example without going often to the throne

of God's grace.

Second, Christ is the authority by which we pray. By this is meant that we pray because Christ has authorized us to pray — He has given us that divine right. He said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." (John 14:13-14; see also John 15:16; 16:23-26; Eph. 5:20.) To pray in the name of Christ means more than just to say "in the name of Christ" at the close of the prayer. It means that one is praying because Jesus taught him to pray; that he recognizes Him as the Mediator through whom his prayers reach the heavenly Father; that he can come boldly before God by the permission of Christ; that he has been commissioned to present the petition he is making. Only that which He has authorized can be done in the name of Christ. Thus His role or function in prayer is to authorize one to pray . . . and to reveal the things for which one is to ask. "In His name" means by His authority. That is, it is through Him that one has access to the Father. He makes it possible for us to pray.

Third, Christ is the Intercessor or Mediator. An intercessor is one who pleads in the behalf of another; a mediator is one who goes between two parties. Jesus serves as both. As our Intercessor, He pleads our case for us. As the Scriptures say: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8:34.) "Wherefore [because He has an unchanging priesthood] he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25.) We take these passages to mean that Christ is now, at the present time, before God making intercession on behalf of His saints — He is plead-

ing our case to the Father. As our Mediator, being equally related to both man and God, Christ bridges the gap between humanity and divinity. Paul connects His Mediatorship with prayer (1 Tim. 2:1-6).

We conclude therefore that the function of Christ in the prayer of a Christian is to set for him an example, to authorize him to pray, and to serve as both an Intercessor and Mediator. Could we ask for more? Could we pray with less?

2. The role of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's prayer. We suppose this has reference to Romans 8:26-27: "Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." We have devoted a whole chapter to this verse in our book, **The Work of the Holy Spirit**, and those who wish a more detailed study of it are referred to it. We have broken the verse down into five sections:

1. The fact stated — "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." We believe "the Spirit" here is the Holy Spirit because the work assigned to Him is a divine work.

2. The help needed — "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought." We are not self-sufficient. We need help in our praying and the Spirit fills that need.

3. The method followed — "But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." The Spirit does for us what we cannot do for ourselves — He pleads our case. This does not say or mean that the Spirit helps us pray but rather that He transports the inexpressible groanings to God, the Father.

4. The material used — "With groanings which cannot be uttered." We have longings and needs which are unutterable by us — that is, we cannot put into proper words the deep needs we feel. And this is what the Spirit does for us.

5. The reason specified — "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the

will of God." While we may have some difficulty in grasping some concepts in this verse, we believe it is saying that the Spirit conveys our groanings to God — that God knows what the Spirit conveys.

This, as we see it, is what these two verses teach. But for some reason it is most difficult for many of us to think of the Spirit having a part in our prayers without immediately jumping to the conclusion that the Spirit is working directly, apart from any system or means. But if He works directly, His work of necessity must be considered a miracle. This simple fact is often overlooked or else ignored. We seemingly cannot conceive of God answering prayer, or the Holy Spirit aiding in that answer, without miraculous intervention. Listen closely to our public prayers and see if we are not often asking God to perform a miracle. Thus the problem here, and with our thinking in general, is that we do not think God works unless He works miraculously. This is a grave error.

While we may not be able to state the process of thinking precisely, the argument seems to run something as follows:

God answers prayer.

But to answer prayer, God must work a miracle, intervene into His orderly system, or work directly or without means.

The Holy Spirit aids in prayer.

The Holy Spirit therefore works directly.

And since the Holy Spirit works directly in prayer He must also indwell and work in the Christian directly (separate and apart from the word of God).

This whole process of reasoning is based on a misconception of the methods by which God works. He has worked in two different ways, miraculously and providentially. To work miraculously is to work directly, that is without means; to work providentially is to work indirectly, that is through means or the established systems. We may never know (in this life) how God works in heaven, how He controls and operates His vast universe, or even how He works through His laws to accomplish His ends. But we can know, because He has revealed it to us, that He works indirectly in the conversion of sinners — He works through the gospel, into which He has

placed His power to save (Rom. 1:16). Because God does not work directly in conversion does not mean that He does not work at all. Indeed not. It simply means that He works through His laws. So whether God works directly or indirectly, the end product is still the work of God.

So it is with the Holy Spirit. We may not know how He works in heaven, as our intercessor in the presence of God, but we can know that when He works in us He does so indirectly, through the word of truth.

And this brings us to another grave misconception of these verses (Rom. 8:26-27), perhaps the fundamental misconception. It is concluded that the Holy Spirit works in us to produce the prayers. This misconception sees the Spirit entering into our hearts and by some means taking control (or at least partial control) and directly implanting the prayers in the heart (which in the final analysis is the Spirit praying through us — He gives us the prayer and we are just the instrument through which it is uttered). Thus the Spirit is seen as helping us to pray. But the Scriptures, neither here nor anywhere else, teach this (except as it relates to inspired men). They teach that the Spirit is an intercessor working for us — taking our prayers to God. He therefore intercedes or pleads in our behalf — He translates or transmits our prayers to the throne of God's grace; He does not produce the

prayers in our hearts. To use Romans 8:26-27 as passages teaching that the Spirit helps us to pray rather than to make intercession for us when we pray is to misuse them, totally and absolutely.

We must therefore learn to distinguish between that which the Holy Spirit does for us and that which He does in us just as we must distinguish between what Christ does for us and what He does in us. Christ saves us — He forgives our sins (or provides the means of forgiveness). That is something He has done for us. But Christ also gives us hope (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3). That is something He does in us. Now does He give hope directly or indirectly? He gives it indirectly, through the means of the gospel system. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26-27). Does this mean that He works directly on us to help us pray? By no means (except as He has done so indirectly). It does mean that He works in some way to transmit our prayers to the throne of God. When God answers prayer, He does so providentially — that is, He does it through His established laws.

Thus the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's prayer is not to help him pray or to answer his prayer directly, but to make intercession to God on his behalf — to make certain that the prayer reaches the throne of God in keeping with the deep and unutterable longings of the heart.

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# Making Needed Adjustments

David Vaughn, Burlington, NC

A few days ago my 1970 Toyota refused to run without sputtering, missing, and jerking — all of which was embarrassing and aggravating. I am not mechanically inclined, but I thought I would experiment. I certainly could not do anything to worsen its condition. I raised the hood and started to adjust a screw called “the timing ignition screw.” As I began to turn the screw, I received a phone call. After a 20-minute phone conversation I had forgotten which way I had turned the screw.

Dave Geddis, a faithful member in Burlington, is an engineer and has a thorough understanding of the automotive engine. I phoned Dave and he told me to bring the car to his house. He said it was no problem to check the timing. Dave showed me what was involved in adjusting the timing. If you know how to adjust an engine this may be boring to you, but it was a great learning experience for me. He showed me the metal pointer on the front of the engine block and the two grooves in the engine drive pulley. Dave got his timing light, plugged it into an electrical outlet and then connected a wire to a spark plug. He started the engine and the timing light flashed every time the spark plug fired. Every time the timing light flashes the metal pointer on the front of the engine will be pointing between the two grooves on the engine drive pulley if the timing is correct. That did not happen with my Toyota! Dave adjusted a screw and the engine drive pulley increased in speed until the metal pointer was pointing between the two grooves. Amazing!

The thought entered my mind that I could tell Dave to leave my car as it was. I know it is not right, but I will drive it as is. I could have told him that his timing light was wrong, and I did not want my car adjusted by what I believed to be a faulty timing light. I could have broken the metal pointer from the engine, or moved it to another position. My response could have been in any number of ways.

Some people manifest these same attitudes toward God’s word. Adjustment is badly needed in their lives. Some recognize that fact, but decide to continue their lives as they are. Again, some do not believe the Bible and they are not going to adjust their life-style to a book they believe to be faulty. There are some who look for a standard (or pointer) that will not require them to make any type of adjustment in their way of living. The light of God’s truth enable us to see if and where we need to adjust our lives. We must make the necessary adjustments regarding:

1. Our respecting the Bible as the authority in all matters pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3b). All Scripture is inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13-14), and is that by which we will be judged (John 12:48). In view of that fact we are to “speak as it were oracles of God.” (1 Pet. 4:11.) We cannot have the blessings of the Father if we “go onward and abide not in the teaching of Christ.” (2 John 9.)

2. Our being the kind of people that we ought to be. The “grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation to all men, **instructing** us to the intent that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.” (Titus 2:11-12.) Peter writes that God wants all mankind to repent. There will be a time when God will bring an end to this physical universe as we know it. The heavens will pass away. The elements will be dissolved with fervent heat. The earth and its works will be burned up. Peter reasons that since “these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness.” (2 Pet. 3:9-11.)

3. Our spiritual growth and development. Would Paul write to 20th-century American Christians, “Brethren, I would not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ . . . for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife . . . ?” (1 Cor.

3:1-3.) Are we growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" (2 Pet. 3:18.) Are we alert to the opportunities about us or have we become "weary in well-doing?" Are we growing in prayer, love for lost souls, knowledge of God's word, Christ likeness? If not, are we willing to make the necessary adjustments

that will bring about the desired growth? Brethren, we do not drive our cars when the timing needs adjusting. Yet we live from day to day with our hearts and attitudes in great need of adjustment. Be honest, examine your life by God's standard and then be willing to make adjustments where needed.

## Apathy

### Max Safley, Spartanburg, SC

Apathy is most likely the greatest hindrance to church work among many Christians today. What is apathy? Webster defines it: "Lack of emotion; lack of interest; listless condition; indifference." It is an attitude, a frame of mind which causes many to stumble. It says, "I will do," but practices, "I didn't." It develops a feeling of "somebody" carrying on the work, whether that work might be cleaning the building or winning souls. It reveals "sick" Christians with emotions and interests revolving around everything else except the hard, basic work of the Lord. It makes assignments and appoints committees at the beginning of the year, but they are forgotten and dropped by the middle of the year. It reminds us of the parable of the royal marriage feast when guests were asked to come, but "they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise." (Matt. 22:5.) It doesn't take seriously the duties appointed. It shows a lack of interest in study, prayer, worship, soul winning, visiting.

The number one killer among Christians today is "heart disease," not the physical kind but the spiritual kind which leads to apathy. It is more than a lack of interest; it is a lack of emotion — and that kills! Just putting things in motion and standing back to see if they will keep going is a form of apathy.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." (1 Cor. 9:24.) Paul's words can certainly apply to all of us. We have seen too many show a com-

plete lack of emotion and interest in the work of the Lord. The greatest task of any leader is to get the people, all the people, to work. But, that old sin of apathy creeps back in. "How often would I have gathered my children together . . . and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37.)

When I say I will do something in the work of the Lord and I do not do it, will I be blessed in my well doing? Certainly not, because I haven't done anything. Just saying "I will do such and such" won't get that job done. Things don't just happen — somebody must make them happen! Too often, that "somebody" is the preacher. Brethren, let us keep our word. Do what we say we will do, and do not forget about it. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14.)

The opposite of apathy is zeal! "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing. . . ." (Gal. 4:18.) The best thing we have going for us is to work in and for Christ. Let us cast off the sin of apathy, and "be about (our) Father's business," with zeal, determination and enthusiasm!

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# The Return To Meaningful Worship

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC

In responding to the question of the Samaritan woman concerning the place where God ought to be worshipped, Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." (John 4:24.) Many will admit that the true worshipper today is more the exception than the rule. A.W. Tozer has written that, "The purpose of God in sending His Son to die and live and be at the right hand of God the Father was that He might restore to us the missing jewel, the jewel of worship: that we might come back and learn to do again that which we were created to do in the first place — worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, to spend our time in awesome wonder and adoration of God, feeling and expressing it, and letting it get into our labors and doing nothing except as an act of worship to Almighty God through His Son Jesus Christ." While we might not go as far as Tozer in saying that the purpose of God's gift of Christ was that we might learn to worship as we were intended to, his point is still well taken. Worship should be an enriching and empowering factor in the Christian's life, but all too often it becomes an exercise in perseverance rather than an exercise in praise. In many worship assemblies the clock draws more attention than the Scriptures. Too many Christians have lost sight of the true meaning, significance and power of worship. What can be done to make worship more meaningful for our people? That is a question that perplexes virtually every concerned church leader and member, with no easy answers forthcoming. It is a question not to be lightly dismissed, for the life of a congregation is inseparably linked to the vitality of its worship.

Some have sought a solution to the problem in the externals of worship. We emphasize, and correctly so, that acceptable corporate worship must be of the proper form; it must follow the Biblical pattern.

The restoration of New Testament Christianity involves in part the restoration of the New Testament pattern of worship, but it is possible to become a slave to form. We have been guilty at times of focusing more on the externals of worship than on its inward aspects, with the result that worship for many of us has become little more than a routine to be endured. Therefore, some have concluded that changes in the routine will revive individual interest in worship, so we rearrange the order of our worship and wait for spiritual revival. Well, variety may be the spice of life, but it is not necessarily the spice of worship. The return to meaningful worship calls not for cosmetic change, but an inward reformation of the mind and heart, which is not so easily accomplished.

What is the key to meaningful worship? Perhaps the answer is to be found in Psalm 145:3-6: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness."

David correctly understood that meaningful praise and worship is a response to the greatness of God. Underlying many of our difficulties with meaningful worship today is a low view of God; low in the sense that many of us have yet to be awed by the glory of His character and the power of His works. David indicates that a high view of God, a view that is conducive to meaningful worship, is the result of deliberate and thoughtful consideration of God's infinite greatness. It might be suggested that we could use more preaching and other Biblical instruction concerning the nature, attributes and works of the Lord. Let those of us who are in a position to do so seek to lead the members of the church into a deeper knowledge of the character and works of our God. Furthermore, let every



Christian be reminded of his individual responsibility to spend time in quiet but intense meditation upon the glorious majesty and honor of his Creator. Worship will

never be what it can and ought to be until we are driven to our knees in reverent awe of the greatness of God.



## THOUGHTS TO PONDER

# The Art Of Forgetting

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

Like many other words, the term “forget” has more than one shade of meaning. It has been said that forgetting is one of the fine arts of living at one’s best. Fine forgetting means character asserting itself! The right kind of forgetting determines what thoughts will be permitted to remain in one’s heart. All the virtues, vices, and qualities of mental and moral life may be defined in terms of forgetting and remembering. It has been stated, “**Selfishness** is forgetting others in over-remembering self. **Worry** is the inability to forget the troubles that may never happen. **Honor** is remembering high standards made evident by acts. **Anger** is the explosion of an overheated memory. **Forgiveness** is the heart’s forgetfulness of an injury. **Ingratitude** is the heart’s forgetfulness of a favor. **Habit** is the memory of acts making repetition easier. **Mercy** is the memory of human weakness tempering justice. **Envy** is forgetting one’s own possessions in over-remembering those of others. **Influence** is the remembered acts of one inspiring the acts of others. **Patience** is forgetting petty troubles along the way in concentrating on the goal. **Love** is the heart’s sweetest memories shrined in another.” However, instead of benefitting by this high use of forgetting, the memory has a tendency to hoard the things that ought to be thrown away, and diligently treasures the things to be forgotten.

**What are some of the things we ought not to forget?**

1. **Our debts of gratitude.** These may be divided into two classes: (1) **What we owe our fellowman.** As humans we are subject to a forgetfulness of benefits and injuries. We even hate those who have done us a kindness. (2) **What we owe to God.** It seems incredible that the children of God forget His blessings, but that is characteristic of

our nature. Let any one of us look back over the past and ask ourselves which of our experiences stands out more prominently — the ceaseless mercies of God we have enjoyed, or the disappointments, sufferings, and injuries, which we have had to endure? One week of illness is fresher in our memory than long periods of good health.

2. **We ought not to forget the good that we hear.** James 1:23-25 says, “For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing.” The contrast here is between the man who casually glances at himself in the mirror and then hurries on and soon forgets what he has seen, and the man who gazes earnestly at his image until what he sees is impressed on his mind.

3. **We ought not forget the cleansing from our old sins.** 2 Peter 1:5-7 reads, “For this very reason make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.” Then in the ninth verse Peter says, “For whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.” If one does forget this cleansing, he will soon be found lacking moral enthusiasm, will sink into indifference, and will eventually become contented with the unclean ways and fashions of the world.

**What are some of the things that we ought to forget?**

1. **We should forget our injuries,** for the

sense of injury is ever aggravated by remembrance. If we continue to think of our injuries, a spark is likely to be fanned into a flame, and how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And, to our own qualities of self-reverence, self-control, gentleness, modesty, and even conscience itself is seared. But, quite apart from these moral damages, what an uncomfortable guest the memory of injuries is to entertain!

**2. We should forget the past that hinders.** This does not mean that we are to be ungrateful and not try to profit by the past, but that we are to take our minds from the past in order to strengthen our concentration on the present. Some people unwisely remember their forgiven sins. They dig up that which the Lord Himself has buried. There are enough things now, and will be in the future, to disturb us, without going to the past and bringing up that which has been forgiven. Some of us cannot forget a failure. The memory of a failure tends to unnerve us in any new attempt. It is hard for a man who has lost to become victorious again. However, this weakening fact may be largely eliminated by learning to forget. Too many of us want to rest upon past attainments. This can be dangerous! It is possible for one to hug his past triumphs to the extent that he never gets beyond them,

and, consequently, have no aspiration for anything further. Of course we should remember them in gratitude and for hope and instruction, but we should forget them when they tend to cause us to think that there is nothing more to be done.

**3. It is useless to brood over the ruins of one's happier days.** There are duties yet to be performed, and the doing of them will bring more happiness. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote this little poem many years ago, but it is still true today:

*Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more  
vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's  
unresting sea.*

**4. Finally, we ought to forget the lower for the higher, or the claims of earth and self for the claims of Christ.** Paul states, "Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I might gain Christ." (Phil. 3:8.)

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## A Job To Do

**Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN**

In the second chapter of Luke, we read the account of Jesus going up to Jerusalem with his parents to observe the Feast of the Passover. However, on the return trip, Joseph and Mary realized that Jesus was not with them. Unknown to them, he had stayed behind in Jerusalem. When he was found, he spoke these words, which are the first recorded words of our Savior in the Scriptures: "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" Even at an early age, Jesus realized the importance of doing the will of God. He had a task to perform, and nothing was going to be accomplished by putting things off until a more convenient

time.

In Acts 24, Felix wanted to wait until a more convenient time to hear about things he needed to do. And as far as we are able to determine, that convenient time never arrived. Paul told the Corinthians, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2.) Jesus told His disciples, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." (John 9:4.)

Have you put off accepting Christ? If so, how much longer do you plan to wait? Have you put off serving Christ? Our duty as Christians is laid out before us in the New Testament. Let us use the time God has given us to do His work.

# A Tribute To An Elder At Rest

## Sam Norman, Charlotte, NC

Brother L.E. Holder, an elder of the Archdale church of Christ, Charlotte, N.C., passed from this life July 17, 1981. Brother Holder, affectionately known as "Red," was born August 11, 1915, in Tiger Bay, Florida. He was educated in the Tampa Schools and at the University of Florida. He was a retired accountant and office manager of LeSturgeon Distributing Company, past President of Charlotte Freight Association, and was on the Board of Directors until his retirement in 1980. He was also a veteran of World War II.

Brother "Red" Holder and his family moved to Charlotte, N.C., in 1947. "Red" and his wife Marge were active members of the original Plaza congregation and in 1954 helped to establish the Dilworth church (now known as Archdale church of Christ). Brother Holder served as treasurer and in 1959 was appointed an elder. "Red" served as an elder for more than 21 years. Words

fail us when we try to describe his example of humility, concern for others, willingness to serve, steadfastness, love for his family and the church; but the best of adjectives most surely apply to his fine characteristics.

Brother "Red" Holder's physical family — wife Marge, daughters, Mrs. Judi Holder Swartz of San Antonio, Texas; Mrs. Jeanni Holder Chastain of Tampa, Florida; Mrs. Susan Holder Helms, of Matthews, N.C.; sons-in-law and grandchildren reflect the love and Christian influence of a faithful husband and father. His spiritual family, the church, likewise has been influenced for good by his love and efforts for everyone's spiritual life.

We have all been richly blessed by having this treasure, brother "Red" Holder, while on earth. The fond memory of "Red" Holder will live with us the balance of our lives. Let's all remember we are living with the same hope of eternal life in heaven as was brother Holder.

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## More on the Poland Relief Effort

**West Monroe, La.** — As previously reported in this column, a 31-truck convoy (instead of the 50 reported earlier), crossed over into Poland, delivering more than 140 tons of food to the 1100 brethren in that country. The response to the plea for the relief of our brethren in Poland is unparalleled among churches of Christ in this century. More than 1,000 churches and hundreds of individuals in the United States, Canada and Western Europe contributed \$1.7 million for food and staple items for the Christians in Poland. Directly resulting from the phenomenal response to the needs of our Polish brethren has been the legalization of the church in the state of Danzig, meaning that the church can now own property, purchase and distribute Bibles and tracts and evangelize with more freedom than ever before. Many of the Polish churches shared some of the food with orphanages and hospitals, which receive very little government aid. It was that same benevolent concern that led the government to grant legal status to the church in Danzig. The Polish press also recognized the generosity of the Polish Christians, which has created a spirit of good will in the hearts of many non-Christian citizens.

The White's Ferry Road church in West Monroe, La., has prepared a special slide/cassette and video tape report on the entire effort. Those desiring either report may write: AMEN, White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, Box 2000, West Monroe, La. 71291. Or call: (318) 322-2000. The cost of the slide report is \$15.00 and the video tape is \$25.00, which represents the approximate costs of producing the materials.

## Jail-Prison Outreach

**Columbus, Ohio** — Senators Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio, and Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, have asked

Robert Rubinow, director of the Jail-Prison Outreach ministry in Columbus, to submit a report suggesting viable alternatives to incarceration for non-dangerous offenders. The senators were made aware that the Jail-Prison Outreach ministry has been responsible for changing the lives of approximately 1,000 inmates over the past five years and that this was done at a considerably lesser cost than what the government presently spends. Rubinow reports that efforts at rehabilitation cost the Jail-Prison Outreach \$50.00 per person as opposed to the government cost of \$21,000-\$26,000. He has written that, "Both senators agree that the approach we are using in our ministry should be incorporated into long-range plans of the various federal and state institutions," (**The World Evangelist**, November, 1981). Brother Rubinow is currently soliciting the comments and suggestions of any Christians who might be interested in this great opportunity. Any suggestions should be mailed to: Robert D. Rubinow, Jail-Prison Outreach, 2239 Kilbourne Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43229.


## F-HC Announces Lectureship Theme

**Henderson, Tenn.** — The theme of the 1981 Bible Lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College will be "World Evangelism at Home and Abroad." This year's lectureship program is scheduled for February 8-12. Evening addresses of the 46th annual program will feature Otis Gatewood, "Preach the Word," Monday; R.C. Oliver, "What Must I Do to be Saved," Tuesday; Guy N. Woods, "The Church — The Medium of World Evangelism," Wednesday; and Joey Ivey, "Saving Our Youth," Thursday. A full schedule of speakers and topics may be obtained by writing to William Woodson, lectureship director, or the Office of Public Information.

## Alabama Christian College Reduces Tuition

**Montgomery, Ala.** — Alabama Christian College has announced a 17.6 percent reduction in tuition for students at the main campus in Montgomery. Wayne Baker, vice president for student services, attributes the reduction to a “growth spiral” in capital outlay and students. Student enrollment at the college has grown at an average of 40 percent the past two years with school of-

ficials expecting another 25 percent increase this fall. That increase in enrollment has enabled the school to reduce the tuition from \$85.00 per semester hour to \$70.00 per semester hour. The announcement of the reduction in tuition comes at a time when many private colleges find themselves in a financial bind and are forced to increase tuition costs. The current school year marks Alabama Christian's first year as a senior college.



# The Bible's Message Of Salvation

**John Waddey, Knoxville, Tn.**

The Bible is God's message to man. In it he reveals his will for us. Hundreds of times the inspired prophets began their message with “Thus saith the Lord” (Jer. 38:17). The Hebrew letter opens with the theme “God hath spoken to us” (1:1-2). The Bible is a collection of 66 smaller books, each of which has its own unique theme which makes a vital contribution to the whole. The word Bible is from the Greek **biblos** which simply means book. Thus we have God's will written in a book.

### To Whom Does it Speak?

The Bible speaks to all men of all nations. It is the only truly universal book. Jesus commissioned his apostles to take his gospel to every creature of every nation (Mark 17:15; Matt. 28:19-20). As would be expected from a book from God, all men great and small, rude or cultured, are attracted to its message and satisfied therewith.

### What Is Its Theme?

The theme of the Bible is one and its found in every book. That glorious theme is that God in his great mercy is willing and anxious to save all men who will trust him and obey his will. This grace is manifest in the giving of Jesus his Son to die for our sins (John 3:16). God promised this in Eden (Gen. 3:15). Prophets foretold it in vivid detail (Isa. 52:13-53:12). Poets sang of the glorious day (Ps. 2:1-22). Men anxiously awaited the coming of the Messiah (Luke

2:25). The New Testament relates the fulfillment of all those ancient promises in Christ's coming, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension.

### What Message Does it Bring?

1. Salvation is in Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:10). In no other name can we hope to be saved (Acts 4:12).

2. Salvation is possible because Christ died in our place (1 Cor. 15:3). Being sinners, each of us deserve the wages of sin which is death (Rom. 6:23). However God allowed His Son to be “wounded for our transgressions . . . bruised for our iniquities . . . and with his stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5). When God saw “the travail of his soul” on Calvary, justice was satisfied and we could be pardoned (Isa. 53:11). In his infinite wisdom, God has decreed that “apart from shedding of blood there is no remission of sin” (Heb. 9:22). But it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin (Heb. 10:4). Therefore “we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:13). The Bible proclaims that “it is the blood of Jesus his Son (that) cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

3. Salvation is a free gift of God's grace (Rom. 6:23). Grace means a favor that is unearned or unmerited. Paul writes, “For by grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God.” (Eph. 2:8.) Man's hardest lesson to learn is that he is totally unable to save himself from the consequences of sin.

Money is of no value. Good works can not avail (Titus 3:5). Righteous conduct can not clean up past mistakes (Col. 2:20-23). Mortification of the body is valueless (Col. 2:20-23). A hymn writer correctly captures the lesson, "In my hand no price I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." Thank God that in his mercy he extends salvation to all men as a gracious, free gift in Christ.

4. Salvation is available to all who believe in Jesus (John 3:16). "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto God. . . ." (Heb. 11:6.) It is an undisputed fact that we are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). I stress that salvation is available to **all** that believe in Christ because many have been led to believe that only a special few will God accept. Peter assures us that God is not willing that any should perish, but that **all** should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). Paul affirms that God "is the Savior of **all** men, especially of them that believe." Our Lord invites **all** that labor and are heavy laden to come to him for rest (Matt. 11:28).

5. Salvation is given to those who have **obedient faith**. "Faith apart from works is death." (Jas. 2:25.) Jesus defines saving faith in John 2:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life: but he that **obeyeth not** the Son shall not see life. . . ."

Another time Jesus said, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29.) Paul wrote to the Roman Christians about the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:6). Always remember that in Christ the only thing that avails is "faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6).

6. Specific conditions are attached to salvation. Having believed we must **repent**. God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Repentance is a change of heart that results in a change of life (see this illustrated in Matthew 21:28-29). Either we repent or we perish (Luke 13:3). To be saved, one must be willing to **confess his faith** in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10). If we refuse to confess him, he will refuse to confess us (Matt. 10:32-33). All are commanded to be **baptized** for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; 10:48). This baptism is an immersion in water (Rom. 6:3-5). It is in the act of baptism that the blood of Jesus washes away our sins (Acts 22:16).

What a marvelous message God's book brings to us. Surely every man and woman desires this good news of the gospel. Dear reader, what will you do with the offer God has extended? It is our prayer that you will respond to the Savior's invitation today so he can cleanse your heart and make you his own.

---

## Walking Wisely . . .

### Harmon Caldwell, Statesville, NC

There are many important and precious things in this world, but none is superior in real intrinsic value than time. Every thoughtful person is aware of this, admits and confesses it without hesitation — but how few use time wisely and apply it to its most important ends and purposes. The apostle Paul was aware of this and hence the admonition he gives: "See then that ye walk circumspectly (vigilantly, watchfully), not as fools (unwise), but as wise, redeeming (buying up, using to proper advantage) the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore, be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph. 5:15-17.)

The word "fools" in verse 15 is from an original Greek word which meant "destitute of wisdom: unwise." The term "unwise" is used in the Revised Version and implies being foolish or foolhardy. Thus the apostle is speaking with direct admonition that we walk, or activate our lives in Christian service in a manner that bespeaks wisdom, not lack of it, or foolishness. The folly suggested in the text is not mental, but moral, not of the head, but of the heart, for one may be wise in many things pertaining to the world and be possessed of all manner of knowledge of the arts and science and sociology and management and history and politics, but have little knowledge of or consideration for the moral and doctrinal



responsibilities God imposes on His children.

Foolish people walk thoughtlessly and do not think or reflect, but rather act impulsively, excitedly. They express themselves much of the time in an excessively emotional manner, and depend really upon their own feelings and the intensity of their own excitement in religious matters rather than on a sane, sober, sensible knowledgeable concept of the will of God. Frequently they become impetuous, petulant, rash, impulsive, which in itself is the height of folly. Wisdom, on the other hand, examines all matters calmly, and decides slowly. All people with wisdom act by rule, whether they be students, laborers, men of science, mechanics, accountants, the farmer, the teacher, the housewife.

In the church this is so. It is true of faithful elders, ministers, all members. The unwise have no principles of settled action. They act without regard to results and plunge headlong into extravagance, bad company, questionable or even evil habits. The foolish person also, tragically, conducts himself without regard for God. As David asserted, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." One might not be an overt atheist to act without regard for and in consideration of God. He who passes Him by, trusts not in Him, has little if any time for Him, and His good works to which He has created all saints (Eph. 2:10) is the unwise, the foolish person. One may busy himself with his personal activities and responsibilities and social pleasantries, but when he does so to the disregard and thus disparagement of the Lord's will as it should exhibit itself in his life, then he indeed is foolish.

But the apostle gives us to understand

that contrary to walking foolishly, we should walk with all circumspection, carefully, watchfully, cautiously, seeking opportunities for good, and refraining from that which would produce ill effects and be sinful. The wise renounces self, preparing for the future, preferring the honors of loyalty to Christ, His church, a Christ-like personal life, and the hope of eternal reward, rather than the stale, temporal, material existence here. The wise man is self-denying, temperate, stable, faithful to duty, obedient to the Lord. His is a life that reflects Christ.

To walk circumspectly and with wisdom one must first submit to the word of God, meditate upon it daily, study it carefully, prayerfully — that he might apply its eternal rules and ordinances and principles. He seeks constantly the spirit of wisdom to direct and keep him in the Way. He walks with the wise and the good. He seeks the grace and favor of the Lord, praying fervently for His help in time of need, asking for power within. All fails without this. The wise use every means for growth and personal development, attending the services of the church for worship and exhortation, cheerfully and effectively engaging in the worship, participating in the work of the church with each opportunity that is before him.

Yes, it is indeed possible to walk unwisely. This can be avoided. Let us walk in wisdom that we have success in our lives as Christians, that we, as integral parts of the body of Christ, the church, devote our utmost to its growth and edification, with our faces set toward the "setting of the sun," and that eternal weight of glory some sweet and blissful day.

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# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S.C. 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Hickory.** Floyd Farris will be leaving the work at Hickory to locate in Pulaski, Tennessee.

**Jacksonville.** Several congregations in the Carolinas assist students to attend preacher training schools. The church in Jacksonville is helping Dan Chapman at East Tennessee School of Preaching in Knoxville. Robert Goff, Jr., is the minister in Jacksonville.

**Taylorsville.** Hugh Campbell of Wilkesboro will be preaching at a 9:00 service in Taylorsville while they have no preacher with them. Hugh is one of the ministers at the Wilkesboro church. Tim Gentle was at Taylorsville.

**Corinth.** Charlie Harrison, minister, was married November 27 to Beth Johnson of the Abilene congregation.

**Charlotte.** Tim Mastenbrook has been named to the eldership at Providence Road. This congregation reports remarkable interest in the series of Marriage Enrichment films by Brecheen and Faulkner. More non-members attended this Sunday night series than had attended any previous activities. Providence Road recently began using their expanded facilities. Their Youth Advance is set for March 19-21.

### N.C. Baptisms

Raleigh, 6; Fayetteville, 3; Jacksonville, 3; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 12; Broad Street, Statesville, 1; Gastonia, 2; Providence Rd., Charlotte, 6; Wilkesboro, 1; West Jefferson, 1; Burlington, 2. Total: 38.

## PREACHER NEEDED

Rocky Mount, N.C. Thirty-member congregation. City population of 40,000.

Please send resume to Steve Mazurek, 2813 Meadowbrook Rd., Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801.

## PREACHER NEEDED

Mt. Airy, N.C., is in need of a full-time preacher to replace Perry Phillips who has moved back to Tennessee. A great opportunity for one who is willing to work. Average attendance is about 40. Adequate support available. If interested, send resume to the church at P.O. Box 247, Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Union.** Carter and Ruth Geer have decided to go to Tanzania, East Africa, as missionaries. They will leave Union the first of February and spend a few months in Hearne, Texas, before going to Africa.

**West Columbia.** The Bob Caulderwood family will be going to Guam in February to begin mission work. Dennis Johnson is on a preaching tour through January 12 in India.

**Rock Hill.** The monthly Preachers' Workshop is scheduled for the first Monday each month through May (except April, which will be canceled in deference to the Carolina Lectures). Dates after May will be announced.

### S.C. Baptisms

Northeast, Greenville, 4; Clinton, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 2; Myrtle Beach, 1; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; Union, 1; Duncan, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 2. Total: 14.

### Greenville, Washington Ave.

BILL G. SMITH, Reporting: Terry Wheeler of Duncan, S.C., has just concluded a good four-day meeting with us. People from eight area congregations visited. Bob Rigdon will be with us April 2-4.

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*"The business of the church is to get rid of evil, not to supervise it."*

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# Editorial Book Views

**Plain Truth About the Revised Standard Version**, Foy E. Wallace, Jr.; Foy E. Wallace, Jr. Publications, P.O. Box 7410, Ft. Worth, Texas 76111; 170 pages, paper \$4.50.

This is a reprint of the chapter on the RSV from the author's large book, **A Review of the New Versions**. Its thesis might be stated in the words of O.T. Allis, who said of the translators of the RSV that they had "gone beyond the limits of legitimate revision." Foy E. Wallace, Jr., felt strongly that the new versions (or which he considered the RSV as the forerunner and the culprit which opened the floodgate) were destroying respect for the Bible rather than providing new and better means of communicating the revealed will of God to man. He thus indicts the RSV as being a product of the modernist, the Bible of the modernist, by the modernist, and for the modernist. Nor does he let his case go begging for evidence. He deals with many things upon which all of us need to be informed. And regardless of how one feels about the proliferation of translations, he needs to consider what Wallace has to say. George Benson said it well in a quote on the front cover: "A new generation just growing into manhood and womanhood needs the Biblical scholarly understanding of Foy E. Wallace, Jr." The contents of this book (though it may at times lean too far in the defense of the KJV) is no exception to this rule. If you have not read Wallace on the versions, by all means get this book (or better still, the larger one from which this one is lifted).

**Lectures and Sermons on the Fundamentals of the Faith**, Rex A. Turner; privately published, 10 Watson Circle, Montgomery, Ala. 36109; 214 pages, cloth \$9.00.

This book comes straight from the heart of a great teacher and preacher. The author spent 31 years as President of Alabama Christian College and since his retirement from that post has served as President of Alabama School of Religion. The book consist of 17 collected lectures, sermons, and articles (most of them delivered at Christian college lectureships) and are un-

doubtedly some of the soundest writing and clearest thinking to appear in our day. There is not a single lecture or sermon in the entire book (excluding three or four articles) that is not a masterpiece, whether it be on the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the pattern of sound doctrine, matters of faith versus matters of opinion, instrumental music in Christian worship, the work of the Holy Spirit, what one must do to be saved, or a time for nonconformity in a day of worldliness. Every one is a rich and rare presentation, containing insights that may not be found elsewhere in a lifetime. Here is lecturing and preaching at its very best.

We have read thousands of books, and reviewed nearly half a thousand in this paper, but we can say without equivocation that very few books, outside the Bible itself, have made a deeper impression on our minds as pertaining to its value in teaching and instilling Christian principles. It discusses old subjects in such a manner as to throw a floodlight on them. As we read we could not help but to exclaim frequently, "Thank God!" And the nagging question kept occurring, "Why have we never discovered the power of this man before?" We still do not have the answer, but one thing is certain: we are determined to read everything that comes from his pen in the future. We think if you read this book you will feel the same way. We thus conclude that it is **must** reading for every preacher, elder, deacon, teacher, or leader in the church . . . or anyone else who wishes a clearer insight to the fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the saints. Do not miss this one. If you do you will be the loser. Of this we are certain.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 2, FEBRUARY 1982



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C292

George Ridings — 1928-1981  
(See page 15)

# The Kingdom Parables

Johnny Melton,\* Statesville, NC

Jesus wore many hats during His earthly ministry. He was an itinerant preacher, a religious reformer, a healer — but pre-eminently Jesus was a teacher. He has been rightly called the Master Teacher. Of course, Jesus' ability as a teacher was undergirded by His divinity. When the people were "astonished at his doctrine," Matthew explains, "for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matt. 7:29.) Indeed Jesus had divine authority. Later He would declare, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18.) But for all His power and authority Jesus still used the best teaching techniques at His disposal. Jesus was a master of the interrogative dialogue. By asking a series of questions He was able to prepare His disciples to receive important truths. Jesus was also a master of illustration. He elevated the use of parables to an art form. Jesus was not the first teacher to use parables, nor was He the last. But He used them more often and more effectively than any teacher before or since.

Someone has observed that a parable is an "earthly story with a heavenly meaning." D.R. Dungan, in his book, **Hermeneutics**, writes of the word parable, "This is from two Greek words, **para**, beside, and **ballein**, to throw; hence a placing beside or together, a comparing, comparison: a story by which something real in life is used as a means of presenting a moral thought. The actors in parables are real — human beings are the actors, and they do nothing which they could not do; things were not related which could not be accomplished by the agencies employed." (page 227.)

Jesus' use of parables was not accidental. The parable especially suited His purposes. Albert Barnes in his commentary on Matthew 13 offered the following explanation: "The design of speaking in parables was the

following: First. To convey truth in a more interesting manner to the mind, adding to the truth conveyed the beauty of a lovely image or narrative. Second. To teach spiritual truth so as to arrest the attention of ignorant people, making an appeal to them through the senses. Third. To convey some offensive truth, some pointed personal rebuke, in such a way as to bring it home to the conscience. Of this kind was the parable which Nathan delivered to David (2 Sam. 12:1-7), and many of our Saviour's parables addressed to the Jews. Fourth. To conceal from one part of His audience truths which He intended others should understand. Thus Christ often, by this means, delivered truths to His disciples in the presence of the Jews, which He well knew the Jews would not understand; truths pertaining to them particularly and which He was under no obligation to explain to the Jews. (See Mark 4:33, Matt. 13:13-16.)" (**Barnes Notes**.)

D.R. Dungan suggested also that Jesus spoke in parables for the purpose of "embalming the truth, that it might never be forgotten." (**Hermeneutics**, page 228.)

Interpretation of the parables has long been a matter of debate. Like the book of

## EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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\*Guest Editor



Revelation many have used the parables as "vehicles" for their sensational theories. Neil R. Lightfoot in his book, **Lessons From the Parables**, offers two simple rules for interpreting the parables. He writes, "The **first** rule in interpreting the parables, then, is to find out the central truth which the parable sets forth. . . . The **second** rule is to understand the parable in light of the circumstances of its origin." (p. 16.) It is important to recognize, as Lightfoot suggests, that there is a central truth to each parable. "It has been urged by some writers, by none with greater force or clearness than by Chrysostom that there is a scope of purpose for each parable, and that our aim must be to discern this, not to find a special significance in each circumstance or incident. The rest, it is said, may be dealt with as the drapery which the parable needs for its grace and completeness, but which is not essential." (*Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. VII, McClintock and Strong, page 646.)

J.W. McGarvey in his commentary on Matthew 13 suggested, "In interpreting the parables of Jesus two fundamental rules must be observed: first, when Jesus himself gives an interpretation, it must be accepted as final and exhaustive; second, only those points of analogy which were certainly in the mind of the author should have a place in the interpretation. The chief error to be guarded against is a violation of the latter rule; and in order to successfully guard against it, one must have a well-balanced judgment and an accurate knowledge of the subjects which the parables illustrate. No rules can be given which will enable a person who is deficient in either of these two qualifications, to become a successful interpreter of these wonderful discourses." (*Commentary on Matthew-Mark*, p. 116.)

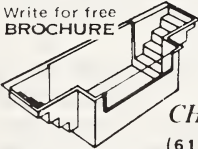
In evaluating and interpreting the parables it should always be remembered that parables are illustrations. There are no doctrinal positions expounded only in the parables. Parables illustrate. "The interpreters of former generations laid down the rule, '*theologia parabolica non est argumentativa*,' i.e., the parables, very rich in mission thoughts, do not furnish a basis

for doctrinal argument." The parables do teach important lessons and they illustrate powerfully principles by which we must live. (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, p. 2246.)

In this special issue of **Carolina Christian** we are focusing attention on seven parables of Jesus recorded in Matthew 13. These are all "kingdom parables." In addition to an analysis of the parables of the sower, the mustard seed, the tares, the leaven, the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price and the net, we have included an article on the meaning of "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew 13.

This material is presented with the prayer that it will stimulate a deeper study not only of these parables but of all the teaching of Jesus. And further, we pray that men and women everywhere will have a greater appreciation for the "kingdom of heaven."

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# The Meaning Of "Kingdom Of Heaven"

## In Matthew 13

Mitch Mitchell, Raleigh, NC

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used by Matthew at least 32 times throughout the gospel account. This is in contrast to the phrase "kingdom of God" which Mark and Luke use predominantly. In fact, "kingdom of heaven" (*basileia ton ouranon*, which is literally, "kingdom of the heavens"), is only found in Matthew except for John 3:5 which is a textual variant with the variant "kingdom of God" better attested by older and more diversified manuscript witnesses. The kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God is a central theme of Jesus' preaching according to the Synoptic Gospels. They use the term "kingdom" (*basileia*) some 110 times as compared with John who refers to the kingdom only four times.

**Basileia** has three different but related meanings according to Arndt-Gingrich. They are: 1) kingship, royal power, royal rule, kingdom; 2) kingdom, i.e., the territory ruled over by a king; 3) especially the royal reign or kingdom of God, a chiefly eschatological concept, beginning to appear in the prophets and elaborated in apocalyptic passages. It is obvious from these definitions that the noun *basileia* denotes sovereignty, dominion, and the sphere of God's rule. J.A. Bengel calls the kingdom "a community ruled by God, not with force, but free-will and affection, the parties being closely united in the free interchange of the offices of love" (*NT Word Studies*, p. 103). Both genitive phrases, "of heaven, of God" show that the kingdom belongs to the heavens, it belongs to God. It is the kingdom that God rules and the kingdom whose very nature is that of the heavens.

As we look more closely at Matthew's gospel, the question must be asked, why does Matthew have this double usage? Does he intend a distinction in meaning between his usual "kingdom of heaven" and his less frequent "kingdom of God?" It is possible that the Jewish background will help here.

Great stress is laid by the Rabbis on the conception of the kingdom of heaven. For example, the recital of the first paragraph of the **Shema** was called "taking upon oneself the yolk of the kingdom" and a response "Blessed be his glorious kingdom, etc." was inserted. Matthew possibly used "kingdom of heaven" due to the tendency in Judaism to avoid the direct use of the name of God. Since a devout Jew would not pronounce the divine name, they sometimes substituted the word "heaven." This possibility would fit very well into the strongly Hebraic character of the book since Matthew is a Jewish Christian writing for Jewish readers. In general, the very fact that the two expressions are interchangeable in the Synoptic parallels leads to the conclusion that Matthew's "kingdom of heaven" would be the exact equivalent of "kingdom of God."

Matthew thus uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew 13 to mean the manifestation of God's sovereign activity among men, his kingly authority. There is evidence in Matthew for a present kingdom, "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matt. 4:17), and a future kingdom (Matt. 24:36-25:46). Note Matthew 25:31, 34, "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. . . . Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" The same dual aspect can be seen in the New Testament epistles. Consequently, Christians are already in a kingdom (Col. 1:13) but they look forward to entering the kingdom in the future (2 Tim. 4:18). Because of this Biblical dual aspect of the kingdom, one must reject the idea of realized eschatology (only a present kingdom, T.W. Manson, C.H. Dodd) and also the idea of consistent eschatology (no present kingdom, J. Weiss, A. Schweitzer).

He promises it will be built upon the bedrock truth that He is the Son of God (Matt. 16:16ff). The Messianic kingdom is prophesied by Joel (Joel 3:28ff) and is established on the first Pentecost after Jesus' ascension into heaven (Acts 2:14ff).

In conclusion, it is obvious that these parables in Matthew 13 set forth the church as the kingdom. In this chapter there are four main topics: 1) the kingdom's message and how it is received (Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23); 2) the present mixed character and future purification of the kingdom (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50); 3) the growth and development of the kingdom (Matt. 13:31-33); 4) the preciousness of the kingdom (Matt. 13:44-46). The church must today realize it is always under the sphere of God's dynamic rule and the lessons from the parables in Matthew 13 are just as applicable in 1982 as they were when Jesus taught them beside the sea of Galilee.



# The Parable Of The Sower

**James Gardner, Winston-Salem, NC**

The teachings of Jesus were not designed to tickle the ears of the proud, or to give importance to a false intellectualism. To understand His commands does not require genius or scholarship so much as it does humility, honesty, and common sense. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." (Matt. 11:25.) Nowhere is this truth more apparent than in the parables of our Lord, and especially in the parable of the sower, in which Jesus used imagery vividly familiar to everyone who ever planted a garden to teach lessons constantly confirmed by each day's experience. Nevertheless, He does not leave us to make even so simple a guess on our own, but provides a clear and authoritative explanation. It remains for us simply to apply the lessons to our own lives, to find the courage to see ourselves in His description, and to get busy in clearing out the stones and rooting up the thorns that make us unfit for the life He has to give. "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower." (See Matt. 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15.)

As the sower sowed his seed on every portion of the field, so God offers His grace to men of every background and spiritual condition. He neither neglects anyone as hopeless nor forces anyone to accept forgiveness, but allows the decision to be ours, whether we choose to be quickened into life or to hold on to the proud sterility of sin. The Bible asserts again and again that "God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17, etc.) He plays no favorites in eternal judgment, and the differing responses to the gospel and the ultimate fates of men reflect no partiality in divine love, but rather reveal the separate choices of free hearts to accept or reject that love. Simeon prophesied that Jesus came so "that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:35.) The process of that revelation continues today, wherever the gospel is preached.

Since God, who knows the hearts of men, nevertheless plants His seed among the thoughtless and the worldly, it would be strange indeed if His ministers took it on themselves to withhold the gospel from those they presume to be unwilling to



receive it; yet, such constantly occurs. Like Pharisees, we decide that prostitutes and drunkards are not respectable enough to be saved; or, being just as foolish in the opposite direction, we conclude that riches and loneliness never coincide, and fail to see the breaking hearts beneath the finery of wealth. We dismiss children as too young, college students as too unstable, working people as too caught up in their professions, the elderly as too set in their ways, the religious as too prejudiced by their own faith, the profane as too contemptuous of any faith: all to justify our own inaction and save ourselves from the necessity of love. But Jesus still commands, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.)

"Some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." Paths in a garden become hardened by traffic so that no seed can penetrate the solid crust, and how much more would this have been true in the fields of Galilee, where the feet of a hundred generations had walked the same trails. Thus, many hearers of the gospel have so hardened themselves that it makes not the slightest impression upon them, fails to penetrate even the surface of their thoughts. It is sad to think that in judgment, when the spiritual state of all men will be revealed, so many will be lost, not because they consciously rejected the gospel, but because they never even considered it. Of all the causes that make men inattentive to the gospel, perhaps the most tragic is a false familiarity with the outward show of religion. Men assume that they are righteous because they endure with glazed formality worship that does not touch the heart and sermons that neither instruct the mind nor challenge the will. They never even hear the Saviour's call.

"Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth." As many commentators have pointed out, the image of the soil that bears a quick and luxuriant growth, that yet endures only for a short time because of its lack of roots in rocky soil, very appropriately describes those who receive the gospel in all the ardor of uncontrolled emotionalism, but never attain real faith. Without the disciplined conviction of

the mind, religious emotion either fails when confronted with the trails of every day life or degenerates into superstition. We must also warn ourselves, however, against the opposite fault. Some men embrace the gospel intellectually and give every appearance of rapid advance in the faith, but then fail at the test, because to remain faithful in the face of persecution requires love as well as understanding. Those who make a stone of the heart have no room for Jesus, for as the poet writes, "How else but through a broken heart may Lord Christ enter in?"

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them." Jesus explained the thorns as "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches." We note that in this case, as in the one just described, Jesus is speaking of Christians who fail to allow their faith to flower into productive living. The Bible does not teach the doctrine of "once saved, always saved," but rather constantly warns, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12.) Neither can the Bible be easily reconciled with the boasts of some in the church who claim they are able to retain 100% of their converts as faithful Christians. Wherever the same message that Jesus commanded is preached, we will have the same tragic phenomenon of some who receive it, only to fall away. This is not to say that we should regard the loss of a single soul with complacency as though it were inevitable, but we should recognize the freedom of each person to choose for himself, after we have given all the aid and support we possibly can, to live his own life. Christians need also to recognize that often there may be thorns of worldly care which, although not strong enough completely to choke out our faith, still limit our effectiveness. Like any garden, we require not only a clearing preliminary to planting, but constant supervision and care.

"But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. . . ." Wherever men are ruled by the Spirit of Christ, the fruit of the Spirit will be produced in abundance. After listing the Christian graces, Peter promises, "For if these

things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor un-

fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:8.)

# The Parable Of The Mustard Seed

**Jim Coviello, Winston-Salem, NC**

The parable of the mustard seed is a small parable that teaches great things (Matt. 13:31-32). Its truth is predicted in Old Testament prophecy, recorded in New Testament history, and experienced by Christians of all ages. It is a masterpiece of verbal images describing the nature of the kingdom of heaven.

## A Parable of the Kingdom

Jesus prefaced the parable with these words: "The kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." This kingdom is evidently the same kingdom mentioned in the following parable — the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24-30; 37-43). It is that kingdom which exists in this world (v. 38); has those planted by Christ as its true citizens (v. 37-38); is affected by the devil and his children (v. 38-39); and will be cleansed, at the end of this world, of all things that offend and them which do iniquity (v. 40-43). This can be none other than the present reign of Christ with Christians as the faithful subjects. This kingdom is the church — that over which Jesus is head and Savior (cf. Eph. 5:23 and Col. 1:13).

## The Mustard Seed

The mustard seed was proverbial in ancient times for something infinitely small. If Jesus was referring to black mustard, He was talking about a seed which must be multiplied 725,760 times to make just one gram. The Rabbis described the slightest quantity of defilement by saying, "Even as little as a grain of mustard seed." Jesus used the proverbial mustard seed to teach a lesson of faith (Matt. 17:20). Even today an Arab proverb says, "No mustard seed slips from the hands of the miser."

Much discussion has been heard over Jesus' statement that the mustard seed became a tree. Just how high something must be to classify as a tree is, of course, debatable. However, one Jewish Rabbi

boasted of a mustard plant as high as a fig tree. Even today, mustard can grow to a height of 2½ to 3 meters near the sea of Galilee. Jesus certainly would not have used this illustration if such a phenomenon were impossible.

## Small Beginnings, Great Results

The central thought of this parable is that there will be a small, seemingly insignificant beginning, followed by tremendous results. This thought illustrates several aspects of the kingdom.

Christ, the founder of the kingdom, had a small, seemingly insignificant beginning, yet became great. Though He left heaven's glory and was in the form of a servant, God highly exalted Him, giving Him a name that is above every name (Phil. 2:5-11). In Isaiah, the Christ was to appear as a "root out of a dry ground" — a man despised in the eyes of the Jews (Isa. 53:1-3). Yet, this despised "root" became a sin offering and savior (Isa. 53:4-11). In Isaiah eleven, the "root" is seen as a branch from the root of Jesse which shall bear fruit and become a great judge over all the earth (v. 1-5). The root of Jesse would be an ensign of the people whom the Gentiles should seek. He would also provide a glorious resting place (v. 10). These facts are beautifully portrayed by the lowly mustard seed which became a tree, giving the birds a resting place!

The gospel of Christ had a small beginning yet spread throughout the world. Isaiah said the word would issue from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-3). The fulfillment of this is recorded in Acts. But as we read the first seven chapters of Acts, it seems as though the word would never leave Jerusalem! Then persecution scattered the disciples and they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:1-4). The efforts of Paul and others continued to diffuse the gospel throughout the world. Concerning the reign of the "root of Jesse"

(Christ), Isaiah said, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9.) In about 60 A.D., Paul said that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23). Today the gospel continues to exist worldwide as the church ever strives to fulfill the great commission (Matt. 16:15).

The kingdom itself became great though it began small. In Daniel, chapter two, the kingdom of God, established in the days of the Roman kings, is described as a stone which became a great mountain, filling the whole earth (vv. 34-35, 44-45). In Isaiah, this mountain is the mountain of the Lord's house which is established on the top of the

mountains and exalted above the hills. Into it all nations flow (Isa. 2:1-4). These prophesies are seen in the parable of the mustard seed. Like Daniel's stone and Jesus' seed, the kingdom began small and seemingly insignificant. Yet, as Daniel's stone became a great mountain and Jesus' mustard seed became a tree, so the kingdom became great, filling the whole earth. As the mountain is over all other mountains, so the mustard plant became greater than all herbs. This seems to indicate that the kingdom of God would be greater than all kingdoms and powers. The kingdom of God is indeed greater than all other kingdoms. Its king is far above all powers (Eph. 1:21). His reign is universal (Matt. 28:18). The borders of the kingdom are not determined by land boundaries. The citizens of the kingdom are children of God. The durability of the kingdom is everlasting (Dan. 2:44).

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# The Parable Of The Tares

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

"But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. . . . And these shall to away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life." (Matt. 25:31-32, 46, ASV.) These are the words of our Lord concerning the subject of the final judgment as He sat on the Mount of Olives, enlightening the minds of the apostles in regard to their questions about the destruction of the temple and the end of the age. But as the apostles listened, this teaching of the judgment was for them no new revelation. They had heard it before in the parable of the tares. The parable of the tares is preeminently a parable of judgment.

As Jesus addressed the multitude He told the story of a landowner who sowed his field with good wheat seed, but while the landowner and his servants were unaware, an enemy slipped in and maliciously sowed tares among the wheat. The tares were a kind of noxious weed that closely resembled the wheat and in the early stages of growth it was virtually impossible to distinguish the tares from the good wheat. When the evil deed was discovered it was too late to affect a remedy. The roots of the tares usually became entangled with the roots of the wheat and to pull up one meant the pulling up of the other. The landowners instruction was to "let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

## **Interpretation of the Parable**

Having delivered this and other parables to the multitudes, Jesus went into the house where He was staying. Shortly afterward the disciples came in, asking the Lord to explain only the parable of the tares. In Matthew 13:37-43 we have Jesus' own explanation: the sower of the good seed is the Lord

Himself; the field is the world; the good seed are the sons of the kingdom, or true believers; the tares are the sons of the evil one; the enemy that sowed the tares is Satan; the harvest is the end of the world, the final judgment; and the reapers of the harvest are the angels, Christ's agents in carrying out His judgment. Yet in spite of this explanation the parable has still been misunderstood, the misunderstanding usually centering in: (1) the statement "Let both grow together until the harvest," and (2) the nature of the kingdom in this particular parable. In order to correctly understand the statement of the landowner we must first understand the nature of the kingdom in this context. What does "kingdom" mean as used in the parable of the tares?

Some have incorrectly understood it to be the church, even though Jesus said that the field is the world and the words "field" and "kingdom" (v. 41) clearly refer to the same domain. This misunderstanding is usually the result of an effort to force "kingdom" to mean "church" in every usage. The words are used interchangeable in the New Testament more often than not, but this does not mean they must always refer to the same thing. In Luke 19:12-27, the parable of the pounds, the kingdom includes both the willing subjects of the Lord and those who refuse to be subject to Him, His friends as well as His enemies. In that context the kingdom includes the good and bad of the whole world. The same is true of the parable of the tares. Furthermore, if in this parable the kingdom is the church, then the statement "let both grow together" would appear to argue against church discipline and for the toleration of wickedness in the church. However, the New Testament is filled with admonitions for the discipline of the ungodly in the church. Therefore, in the parable of the tares the word "kingdom" is used in its broadest sense to include the good and the bad of the whole world. If it be asked "How is the world the kingdom of Christ?" we need only to remember Jesus' claim that "all authority hath been given

unto me in heaven and on earth.” “Let both grow together until the harvest” simply means that the removal of the sons of wickedness from the world is reserved for the Lord at the final judgment. Church discipline is not prohibited, as some have so understood the statement, but the church is prohibited from assuming for itself a power that belongs only to Christ.

The parable also affirms the righteous vindication of Christ. It often seems that the wicked not only coexist in the world with the good, but that they also triumph over the good in many instances. Satan appears to be in control as he sows the seeds of discord and deception, but the victory is only imaginary. The time will come when the “Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. . . .” Christ will appear in all

His splendor and power, manifesting His justice in the final judgment. Satan and his children will be eternally defeated as they are cast into hell like the tares into the fire. As for the sons of the kingdom, they will be vindicated in that day and shall “shine forth as the sun.” In contrast to the injustices, oppressions and temptations endured here, in heaven the righteous shall bask in the magnificent glory of that eternal home.

Jesus closed His exposition of the parable by calling on His listeners to have open and receptive ears, “He that hath ears, let him hear.” The call is for a constant attitude, a willingness to take active heed to the warning contained in the parable. It is as if Jesus were trying to get His listeners to ask themselves, “Am I a son of the kingdom or a son of the evil one?” or, “How will I stand at the final harvest?” We might indeed ask ourselves the same questions.

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## Parable Of The Leaven

**Jerry Senn, Greer, SC**

“The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.” (Matt. 13:33.)

Some have erroneously suggested that this is an illustration of how evil would work its way through the church, leading to an eventual apostasy. Those who have taught this are influenced by the fact that in Scripture leaven most often symbolizes something to be avoided. However, our Lord said, “The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast (leaven).” And, taken on context, His design is clearly to show us the nature of the Kingdom and how it is to function.

“Any careful reader of the Gospels is bound to be struck by the obvious effort of Christ to make His hearers understand the nature of His cause. The effort was marked by the tireless use of a great many figures. He told His little company that they were . . . salt . . . light . . . leaven. . . . A powerful insight comes when we realize, suddenly, what they have in common. Each figure represents some kind of penetration.

They make absolutely clear what the function of Christ’s company is meant to be. The church is never true to itself when it is living for itself, for if it is chiefly concerned with saving its own life, it will lose it.” (Elton Trueblood.) What is true of salt that has lost its savor is true also of leaven that will not penetrate.

We can gain much insight, from a practical standpoint, about what we today are calling “church growth” from this simple parable. Its message is monumental when we allow it to have an impact on our lives. Here are **Four Lessons From the Leaven.**

First, **why it works.** A large lump of dough (“three measures” — more than a bushel) is the assignment for a tiny piece of leaven. It is to become involved in that whole mass and in so doing transform its shape and substance. Disproportionate odds, indeed! The mass is dead. The yeast is active energy. That is **why** the process is possible.

Jesus was sent by God to save **all** men. His single life and sacrifice brought a living and active energy into a dead world. The

good news of salvation was to be taken to "all creation" (Mark 16:15) by such a small company. But, God's people have this powerful good news within us. That active force is more than equal to the task.

In today's mass of unconverted humanity, the church must not merely "count heads" but rather become completely confident in the powerful gospel of the kingdom. With it we are "mightier than the lump." "They that are with us are more than they that are in the world."

Second, **where it works.** The heaven must be mixed. It works only as it touches something and penetrates it. It cannot work in seclusion. "The dough is not kept on one shelf and the heaven on another; the bit of heaven is plunged into the heart of the mass, and then the woman kneads the whole up in her pan, and so the influence is spread." (A. Maclaren.) Jesus prayed, "I have given them your word. . . . My prayer is not that you take them out of the world. . . . I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message. . . . May they . . . let the world know that you sent me and love them. . . ." (John 17:14-15, 20, 23). Let's learn this lesson. Holding services in our church buildings is not sufficient. The "come and get it" method will fail. The Jerusalem church was among the people and "the number . . . grew to about five thousand" (Acts 2:27; 4:4). Contact with people daily provided the opportunity. We would need fewer campaigns if we all were continually aware of the powerful heaven within us as we go through our daily routine. Yes, we must be in the world. But let us be there as Christ's representatives taking the good news with us. Heaven works where it touches.

Third, **when it works.** Consider the effect of the heaven on the dough. It penetrates the lump only when a chemical change or reaction takes place. This is called fermentation. When we contact souls with the good news of Jesus there will be a reaction. There certainly was in the first century. "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they took note that these men had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13.) They were known as that bunch who had "turned

the world upside down." A ferment indeed! Why not today? Will we claim to possess the kingdom and be the heaven and yet no ferment or change? The purpose of heaven is to change the whole lump. It changes by lightening it, by putting a new spirit (life) into it, and will cause it to rise. How exciting to be heaven. It is a changed life that changes other lives. It works when change is taking place.

Fourth, **how it works.** A clear "method" of operation is suggested in the nature of heaven. It works as one particle is changed and touches the particle nearest it, and transforms it into a "vehicle for the further transmission of influence." It is mass change but in a gradual and almost unnoticeable manner. There is not a great explosion. Time and patience are involved. The principle is observed in all kinds of places and ways. "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him. . . . Finding Philip, he said to him, 'Follow me' . . . Philip found Nathanael and told him. . . ." (John 2:40-41, 45.) That is how it will work today!

How did our forefathers accomplish the monumental task of taking the good news to their generation? Not with carpeted church buildings and padded pews. Not with eloquent men in their pulpits. Not by a few "professionally trained personal workers." No indeed! When each citizen of the kingdom is putting into practice the simple truth of Jesus' parable, the world will become aware of the heaven. No, we will never convert everyone. But in most places, the "lump" or community does not even know that we exist, much less why we exist. It will work if we will! It will work when we get that active force in our hearts, get involved in people's lives, demonstrate that something wonderful has changed us and is changing us (and let there be evidence that it is genuine) and when we lead another to Jesus they will turn to their friends with the same good news. What a revolutionizing principle! How simple and powerful! Will we grasp it? Will we get busy and see it work in 1982?



# Hidden Treasure And Pearl Of Great Price

**T. Douglas Couch, Asheboro, NC**

Everybody likes a bargain. Shoppers stand outside a department store during pre-dawn morning hours so they will be among the few to purchase a great bargain. Other individuals will burn \$2.00 worth of gasoline in order to save 50¢ in the purchase of an item. Great efforts, then, are expended every day for the sake of a bargain.

More important though, are spiritual bargains. As hundreds of "prospective shoppers" sat on the beach, our Great Rabbi stood on a ship and directed three parables for their consideration (Matt. 13:1-35). Departing with His disciples for a house, Jesus gave three more parables concerning the heavenly kingdom (Matt. 13:36-52). Two of these were about bargain seekers (Matt. 13:44-46). One was about a treasure seeker who stumbled upon a field containing valuables, who immediately liquidated all assets in order to purchase the field. The second was about a merchant seeking goodly pearls, when upon finding one, did as the treasure seeker; sold all in order to buy. Both parables are about the kingdom and have these similarities: 1) Both men were seeking a specific bargain; 2) Both found their bargain; 3) Both forsook all for the sake of obtaining it; 4) Both invested all for the bargain. If we are to be rich toward God we must in similar ways become the seekers of that which has spiritual values.

## **Bargain Seeking**

Treasures unsought remain unfound. Yet these two parables illustrate two ways of coming into the kingdom: seeking with little or no effort, and seeking with great effort. Scripture testifies how some came to salvation with very little effort. The Gentiles, who were not seeking God but in some way found Him (Rom. 10:20); Nathanael, who was very skeptical upon first hearing about Jesus, but later became an apostle (John 1:49); Zacchaeus, one who climbed a tree in order to see Jesus, and eventually had Jesus as his dinner guest and Savior (Luke 19:4). Christians today are thrilled to hear of lost

souls who obey after reading a gospel tract, hearing a radio sermon or after inviting doorknockers into their home. Perhaps one of the joys of heaven will be to listen to some of these thrilling stories of people who found this bargain with little effort.

In most cases, however, great efforts are expended in order to find the gospel bargain. Our Lord recognized this as He said, "But seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness. . . . Seek and ye shall find. . . ." The word seek is present tense in these verses (keep on seeking) as well as in our second parable (Matt. 6:33; 7:7; 13:45). Therefore most people discover the kingdom only after a long persistent search. Nicodemus was a dissatisfied Jew who searchingly came to Jesus for information. Later he was identified as a disciple (John 3:1-13; 19:39). The Ethiopian treasurer was one who traveled 1500 miles to Jerusalem in order to worship God only to discover Jesus on the return trip when he was introduced to Philip (Acts 8:26-40). Cornelius was one who had to cross racial barriers in order to come to God (Acts 10). These examples show that whatever barriers exist between the sinner and salvation (Nicodemus-religious, treasurer-geographical, Cornelius-racial), in most cases, diligence is required to find spiritual bargains. Today, many people are coming to salvation after discarding the cheap imitations that attempt to mimick the kingdom of heaven: Denominationalism, Catholicism, Judaism, Paganism, and Atheism. It is easy to see why these efforts are necessary. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." (2 Cor. 4:3-4.)

## **Bargain Values**

Since the Lord's church exists in most countries today, the unbeliever's blindness is not to the kingdom's existence. To the contrary the blindness is to the kingdom's value. People do not seek, because they do not value. If more valued the church, more would be in it. Jesus gave up the riches of heaven to establish His kingdom (2 Cor. 8:9). Possessing no home, property, nor

earthly riches (Luke 9:58), He shed His blood to make the kingdom a reality (Acts 20:28). The apostles became conscious of its value and gave up their families as Paul did (Acts 9:23; Rom. 9:2-3), or jobs as Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Matt. 4:18-22), and even their lives, as James and Peter did (Acts 12:1; John 21:18-19). Not only did Jesus and the apostles value the kingdom, but their writings reflected this value.

Today, many Christians are investing their energies into heaven's kingdom because they realize the worth of God's church. Treasures are being deposited into heaven's vault where they accumulate interest as time progresses (Matt. 6:19-21; Eph. 2:7). Do not wait until eternity to finally realize its value. Do not be as Queen Mary of England who was reputed to have said on her deathbed, "Millions for an inch of time."

### **Bargain Buying**

Once one values this treasure he will

desire to obtain it. Before he can do so there are some things he must do. He must completely divest himself of all earthly interests: Old prejudices (whether toward people or ideas), self-righteousness, pride, passion, and interests in worldly possessions and pleasures. He must do as Jesus said, "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:33.)

Have you done what Jesus said to obtain the pearl of great price? The two parables show each man buying a bargain. While we cannot "buy" salvation, we can invest into the kingdom of our time, resources, and talents. Do not do as some who procrastinate till old age. Do not consider the kingdom a waste. May we do as the treasure seeker who "in his joy goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth." (Matt. 13:44.) May we do as the Ethiopian treasurer who, upon being immersed into the kingdom, came up out of the water and "went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:39).

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## **The Parable Of The Net**

### **Sid Fulford, Charleston, SC**

The parable of the net (Matt. 13:47-50) is a straightforward declaration by our Lord that not all who are identified among us as part of the church will be saved. Quite the contrary, it teaches us that some included in the fellowship of the church will, in the judgment, be separated and condemned to eternal punishment.

The figures of the parable are clear. The sea represents the world. The net represents the kingdom of heaven, which is the church. The fish taken into the net are all those who enter the church. The good fish are those who serve the Lord faithfully, having been truly converted. The bad fish are those who enter the church with false motives. Finally, the separation of the good fish from the bad fish represents the final judgment when the wicked in the church will be separated from the righteous, and will then be condemned.

At least two difficulties are seen by some in the impact of this parable.

First, it is asked, how can the wicked be in the church? Since God is the one who adds men to the church, are we to believe that he adds any who are not truly converted?

This difficulty is removed, however, when we realize that our Lord's teaching reflects the difference between God's perception of the church and ours. Surely no one could seriously maintain the notion that God forgives one who does not truly obey the gospel. But only God can know if one does not truly obey the gospel. When the gospel is preached and men respond, confessing faith in Jesus and desiring to be baptized, we baptize them and recognize them as part of the church. That is what we must do. That is all we can do. If one confesses faith and is baptized with false motives, we cannot know it. But God knows it, and there is no reason to believe that such false respondents enter into any fellowship with God, even though we accept them into our fellowship on earth.

It is simply the difference between the infinite God and our finite selves. All we can do in accepting men into the church is observe their behavior. God, on the other hand, knows them through and through. (1 Sam. 16:7.) And for this reason it is entirely possible that we accept some into the church whom God never accepts. They are fish taken into the net. But they are bad fish; and even though the faithful on earth may never detect it, God has already determined that they shall some day be separated from the faithful.

A second difficulty that some see in this parable has to do with the exercise of discipline in the church. Some would contend that since Jesus said the wicked would be separated from the righteous "in the end of the world," we must make no attempt to separate any disobedient from our fellow-

ship on earth. This argument would have us tolerate any and every kind of behavior in the church and would leave us in open defiance of other explicit teachings of the Scriptures (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5).

Remember what we have already said concerning these bad fish. They represent people who, so far as we can see, belong in the fellowship of the church. Only God knows they do not. Church discipline, however, is directed against those whose behavior is such that not only God, but all faithful brethren, can see their sinfulness. Discipline in the church is not based on speculations about the condition of the inward man. It is based on conduct which all can observe.

The teachings of the Scriptures are plain on the matter of church discipline. Surely every student of the word of God knows that faithful brethren cannot continue in fellowship with those who defy the will of God and refuse to repent. But these are brethren whose unfaithfulness can be seen by all. It is an unfaithfulness that is manifest in their behavior. When the church does withdraw fellowship from such, it is not being presumptuous to judge their hearts. It is simply judging their behavior (1 Cor. 5:3).

Consequently, the parable of the net has no real bearing on the subject of church discipline as we are to practice it on earth. When discipline in the church is necessary, it must always be done in the manner and within the boundaries set forth in the Scriptures. But the parable of the net teaches us that some whom we see as part of the church, may in fact not belong in the church in the eyes of God, and that He will separate them and condemn them at the end of the world.

We are reminded of Paul's words, "You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine." (Rom. 6:17.) These are the good fish, the true believers. These are the ones who truly belong in the kingdom of heaven. Men can know they are the obedient children of God. More than that, God knows them as His faithful children. The others, though considered part of the church by brethren who have no basis to do otherwise, are the bad fish who will be cast out.

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# Tribute To A Man Of God

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

On November 3, 1981, brother George Franklin Ridings was suddenly and swiftly taken from this life at the age of 53. Although many mourned the fact that brother Ridings was a relatively young man at the time of his passing, his life attests to the truth that a man's life is ultimately measured not by the quantity of his days, but by their quality. George Ridings was known by all as a man of God, which is all he ever sought to be.

Brother Ridings was a native of Clemmons, North Carolina, and spent most of his Christian life as a member of the Warners Chapel Church of Christ in Clemmons. He served that church as a deacon for more than ten years before going with the troupe that helped to establish the church in Yadkinville in 1979. He had served that church as an elder from its inception. As an elder, brother Ridings was a man of vision who believed that the church must reach out to its own members and to those outside of Christ and was always supportive of any active outreach that was Biblical. He worked in perfect harmony with Gary Harper, his fellow elder, to establish an evangelistic and benevolent outreach that is having an impact on the Yadkinville community.

The life of George Ridings was a picture of practicality and simplicity. He cared little for the material enticements that entrap so many of us and emphasized in his teaching and living the doing of the will of God. George was a diligent student of the Bible and possessed more than just a "working knowledge" of the word. He worked hard all of his life because he believed in the nobility of work and in glorifying God through one's work. He was putting that belief into practice at the very moment of his death.

It was evident to anyone who knew George that Christ and the church were his first love, but it was just as evident that he dearly loved his wife, Mary. Their marriage of 29 years was a model of love, devotion and faithfulness. That union bore two sons,

Eddie and Frank Ridings, who are also members of the Yadkinville congregation. Eddie is a deacon in the church and Frank is a Bible class teacher. Both are loving disciples of Jesus and reflect the Christ-centered environment that prevailed in the home of their father.

The funeral was conducted at the building of the Warners Chapel church by Harmon Caldwell, a former minister at Warners and presently the preacher of the Broad Street church in Statesville, and Dennis Conner, minister of the Yadkinville church. His body was laid to rest in the little cemetery on the Warners Chapel property.

Our first inclination is to feel that the church in this area is the poorer for the loss of this fine leader, but when we broaden our vision to encompass the whole of his life, we then understand that through his life of service and love George Ridings has left an indelible impression on the church that will be felt and remembered for years to come. He often quoted the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I am of Christ." We are not unaware of the imperfections of brother Ridings' life, but those imperfections were overshadowed by his desire to point others to Christ by the example of his own life. He was an imitator of Christ.

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*"A wise man learns from the mistakes of others. Nobody lives long enough to make them all himself."*

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.

## Hymnal Museum in Planning Stages

**Bell Buckle, Tenn.** — Johnny Bowman of the Bell Buckle church is leading an effort to assemble a collection of old hymnals for the purpose of displaying them at the popular Diana Singing. Plans call for the collecting of songbooks that date from 1840 to about 1940. Anyone interested in this new project can help by searching for these old hymnals. An abbreviated bibliography listing the desired books has been prepared and will be sent to interested individuals upon request. Those desiring to donate a book to the museum are also being sought. Brother Bowman has written that "when the museum is built, these books will be on display for the enjoyment of all who are interested in the history of singing, songwriters, and hymnal publishers within the brotherhood over the years." He suggests that some of the needed songbooks can be found in storage places, flea markets, yard

sales and auctions. It is not at all unusual to find old songbooks in antique shops if one looks with a discerning eye. Such a museum would indeed add to our appreciation of our Restoration heritage in this country. Those requesting more information on the project are asked to write to this address: Johnny Bowman, c/o Church of Christ, Bell Buckle, Tennessee 37020.

## New Chinese Translation to Be Produced

**Durante, Okla.** — It was recently announced that the 7th and Beech church in Durante and International Bible Translators have entered into a joint project to produce a new translation of the Bible in Chinese to be used in the People's Republic of China. Almost one-fourth of the world's population is located in Red China and with the government there opening new doors of opportunity for the church, a good, reliable translation has become an immediate need. Stanley Morris, Director of Translations for International Bible Translator, will be working with a committee of Chinese speakers to produce a new translation



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## CROSSROADS ISSUE

The most popular and far-reaching issue we have ever run of **Carolina Christian** was the June 1981 number on Crossroadsism. Hundreds of request for additional copies have been received from all over the nation. The articles have now been reprinted (not the whole issue) and are available for distribution. 20¢ per copy (plus postage), \$15 per hundred.

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## *Carolina Church News*

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

#### **David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

**Winston-Salem.** The Linville Forest and Warner's Chapel churches are cooperating in a new radio program over WTOB. It will be at 8:30 a.m. Sundays. The preachers of the two congregations will share the program.

**Statesville.** Abilene congregation is sponsoring three 5-minute radio programs between 7:45 and 8:00 every Sunday morning. These are "Directions" with Rubel Shelley, "Moments With the Master," Johnny Melton, and "Upreach," Harold Hazelip.

**Hickory.** The new West Hickory congregation is now in their new building. A complete report will be given next month.

**Mooreville.** The new preacher is Mike Mobley. The Mobleys had previously been with the church in Salem, W. Va.

#### **N.C. Baptisms**

Raleigh, 7; Fayetteville, 1; Wilkesboro, 4. Total: 12.

#### **Elizabeth City**

GLENN MARTIN, Reporting: On behalf of the Bayside Church of Christ we take this means of informing one and all that brother Ed Harris of Southaven, Mississippi, has accepted our invitation to be our minister effective January 1, 1982.

Brother Ed is 43 years old, a graduate of Abilene College, and has acquired some twenty years of experience preaching the gospel and working in regard to personal evangelism.

He and his wife, Frances, are the parents

of a daughter, who is married to a preacher, a son who is a student at Harding College, and a son who is in the seventh grade.

Brother Harris will plan to be here so that he can preach at both worship services on Sunday, January 3, 1982, and begin our Lord's work as minister of Bayside Church of Christ.

Also for all those who have not yet been informed, the Martins are staying on as members of the Bayside congregation, and will have the same address, but the new telephone number is 338-2708.

### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**West Columbia.** Last month we reported that the Bob Caulderwoods were going to Guam. An update indicates that their plans have been postponed.

#### **S.C. Baptisms**

Chester, 2; Essex Village, Charleston, 3; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 1; Central Spartanburg, 1; North Charleston, 1; Northeast, Greenville, 1; West Columbia, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 1; Ray Road, Moonville, 2. Total: 13.

#### **Ray Road, Moonville**

DON STEVENS, Reporting: January 10th marked a great day for the church which meets at Ray Road in Moonville. We had decided on 1-10-82 that with the Lord's help we would try to have 110 in our Sunday morning assembly. Much hard work and prayer went into preparation, inviting those of the community, preparing a fellowship meal for all after services. Finally the day arrived and a very cold day it was. This brought thoughts that we might not reach our goal because of the weather. We set up 100 chairs the night before and had about ten or twelve extras in classrooms to be moved in. We had discussed the fact that if these were not enough, several members



could stand in the back or at the sides.

Our Sunday morning class began with a few people drifting in late. One member came a little early and unloaded his car and left again for another carload. That's the best excuse I've ever heard for being late. The final count for class was 98. Would twelve more people arrive? Had the cold kept people away? Just before services began several cars pulled into the parking lot. It looked as if we might just get that 110 we wanted. Services began and during the first and second songs people were still slipping in the back door. Brethren, we had prayed for 110 people but the Lord has proved Himself true to His word. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." So say we and amen. The Lord blessed us with 131 in attendance instead of 110 and two precious souls were baptized into Christ that very day bringing the total baptisms at Ray Road since August 1981 to eight.

Brethren, continue to pray for us. There is a great work to be done in this area. We desire your prayers for the wisdom and willingness to take Christ into this community. We love you all and pray continually for God's richest blessings for each of you.

**Southeastern Children's Home**

R.W. SENN, Reporting: Southeastern Children's Home is beginning its tenth year of operation. The home has cared for approximately 120 children. Some have stayed as long as eight years. We helped one to at-

tend college for a while. Others are out on their own. Some have returned to parents; some have been adopted or placed in foster homes by the Department of Social Services. At this writing we have six children in our homes. If you know of children that need a good home, please contact us.

We want our contributors to know that we are deeply grateful for their support of interest and contributions, because without them, the home could not have made the progress that it has. We say, "Thank you, thank you."

We have been for some time now considering a new plan for the home which we feel would be a way to give better service to more children in the Carolinas. This plan is to secure a person with a master's degree in sociology who is a faithful member of the church of Christ to work with us. By doing this we will be able to place children in foster homes and to operate an adoption agency, just as the department of Social Services does and without their help.

Some time ago the home bought a house in Greer, S.C. This house is adequate to be used as a residence for the social worker as well as for office space and as a temporary place to keep children. At some point in the future our work would be centered around the Greenville-Spartanburg area, therefore, giving a greater service to a greater number of people.

We are now searching for a qualified person to work with us. If you know of such a person please contact us at 1631 Pine Lake Drive, West Columbia, S.C. 29169; or phone (803) 796-1384.

This new plan is going to take more money so we are asking that you increase contributions or if you have not given

**GOSPEL MEETINGS, ETC.**

<b>North Carolina</b>	
S. Fork, Winston-Salem, James Watkins .....	March 1-5
W. Hickory, David Pharr .....	March 15-17
Providence Road, Charlotte, Youth Advance .....	March 19-21
<b>South Carolina</b>	
Gaffney, Stanley Crews .....	March 21-24
Florence, Roy J. Hearn .....	April 4-7

before, this is a good time to start. Please send all contributions to Joe Manning, Route 1, Box 48A7, Gilbert, SC 29054.



## Editorial Book Views

**DeHoff's Commentary, Vol. VI**, George W. DeHoff; DeHoff Publications, Murfreesboro, TN 37130; 374 pages, cloth \$17.95.

With this aristocratic volume, George W. DeHoff finishes a monumental work — a commentary on the whole Bible. This particular one covers Romans through Revelation. And while the comments are brief by design it gives a wealth of help and delightful insights to every verse it covers. We have reviewed each volume here as it was published with high praise and deep appreciation, but we have been more highly impressed with this one than either of those preceding it. Romans and Revelation, it seems to us, receive the best treatment of any other books in the Bible. We think he took the most unlikely approach to Revelation (the historical one) but he handles it well, though no more convincingly than those who have gone before him. Every verse is treated with reverence and fear because the author believes the truth and accepts every word as a word from God.

It was our high honor to be asked to write the introduction to this sixth and final volume. Here is the final paragraph in that introduction: "In this commentary the reader will soon learn that God is; that the Bible is the word of God; that Jesus Christ

is the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the Lord of Christians; that the Holy Spirit is the means by which the revelation of God (the word of God) was delivered to man; that the love, mercy, and grace of God have made possible the redemption of lost man; that God has a plan by which the lost are saved; that the saved are added to the church which was purchased with the precious blood of Christ (Acts 20:28); that God has a plan by which His adopted children are to live, worship, and work; and that those who remain faithful to God and His Son have the hope of eternal life in the world to come. These and a thousand other fundamental Bible subjects are clearly affirmed and illuminated in **DeHoff's Commentary**. May it have a long and useful life in praising God, honoring Christ, exalting the Bible, teaching the plan of salvation, enlightening Christians, saving the lost, and making the Bible, that blessed book of God, more meaningful and practical to all who read it."

If you have the previous volumes, you will want to add this one to your set immediately; if you have not purchased the previous ones, you will want the whole set. It will add prestige to your library, beauty to your bookshelves, and riches to your heart and mind.

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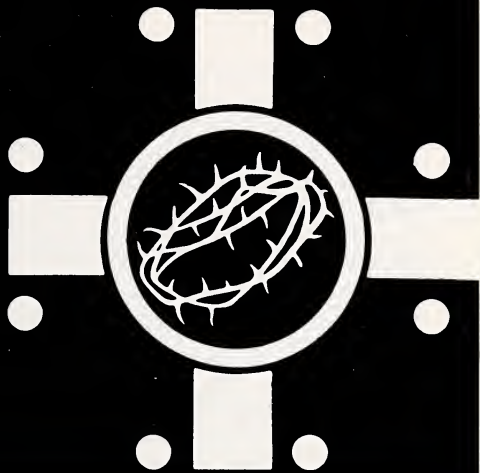
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 3, MARCH 1982



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Highland Acres — Statesville  
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(See page 9)

# editorial

## PRICE INCREASE

The perennial plague is upon us again! The cost of getting **Carolina Christian** to you has increased unmercifully in the past two months. First, postage rates took a tremendous hike, almost doubling at a single stroke. Then on top of that our printers notified us that the cost of printing the paper was increased by twelve percent. Both of these coming at the same time is a load far too heavy for us to absorb. We therefore have no choice but to increase subscription rates.

So beginning now, single subscriptions will be \$5 per year; clubs of five or more, \$4.50; bundles and mailing lists will be 25¢ per copy. We are extremely sorry that this action is necessary, but it must be taken if we are to survive. And survive we must. With the increase, **Carolina Christian** will still be one of the best bargains on the market.

## AMERICA AND ALCOHOL

America's love affair with alcohol has caused her to lose her sense of reason. One of the many ways this fact is shown is by accepting the debauchery of drunkenness as a disease rather than for what it is, a shameful, degrading, and destructive addiction (and to the demeaning of the holy name of Christ and His divine body, the church, some who profess to be Christians have joined hands with Satan to try to defend the practice that causes drunkenness, namely, drinking). As we have said before, alcohol is the number one drug problem in this country. It is also the third ranking health problem, following heart disease and cancer.

If any think we have overstated the case, let him consider our actions toward the three most ranking health problems among us. We spend multiplied millions to find a remedy for heart disease and cancer (we even spend millions to try to stop the traffic in all drugs except alcohol) while we authorize, advertise, promote, make, sell, and consume alcoholic beverages at the rate

of sixty billion dollars annually. Does that make sense? Of course not. It is rank stupidity. But that is not all: we pick up 25,000 dead from our highways each year caused by it. And you can add to that another 100,000 wounded, broken, and bleeding persons who will have to live with their handicap the remainder of their lives. Does that make sense? It is absolutely irrational! But even that is not the end. We build prisons, half-way houses, and hospitals to try to salvage the warped and wrecked lives while producing, defending, and consuming the cause of their warping and wrecking. This is totally senseless. But worse still (if anything can be worse) we deceive ourselves into thinking that we do no wrong just so long as we do not become skid row drunks. It is the drunks who have sinned, not those who drink. Folly of follies! Every skid row bum and alcoholic once stood precisely where everyone stands who is about to take his first drink. And if there is any difference in the first and the last drink, the first must be more evil than the last. The first is taken by one who has full control of his intellectual powers. He should know better. The last is taken when alcohol has destroyed part of the brain, weakened the will power, and under the

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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strong urge of addiction — it is taken by a desperate man who has lost all directions in the maze of life and knows no other way to turn.

Thus far America and alcohol. But the most despicable of all is for a professed Christian to argue the Bible condones or approves drinking just so long as it is not to drunkenness, thus lowering the Bible to approve of the vast evil caused by alcohol. Nothing could be farther from the truth. And if America has lost its senses in that which pertains to alcohol, what might be said of those who profess to be Christians who defend its manufacture, sales, and consumption on Scriptural (?) grounds? God pity a people who stoop this low!

## EVOLUTION AND LIFE

The naturalistic view of man and the world in which he lives has now become so widespread that every aspect of our society, education, the press, government, etc., is permeated by it and works on the basis that evolution is a fact. Even the **Reader's Digest**, the last great bastion of moral purity among the secular magazines, has succumbed. Every article now that in any way implies origins assumes evolution over long periods of time. Christians are left alone now to plead for creation and the Creator. They alone have an objective moral standard. And unfortunately many who profess Christianity compromise the truth by accepting theistic evolution (a complete surrender to the naturalistic view) and practice situation ethics.

But did life not evolve — that is, did it not appear first as a single cell and by chance develop into all the complex forms of life now known? Absolutely not! One of the firmest facts of science is that life comes only from life (no exception to this has ever been known). But that is not all, life comes only by reproduction of its kind, as is clearly stated in Genesis 1. It cannot be imparted at will. For example, humans have life, but they cannot impart that life to anyone or anything else. It can be imparted **only** by the process of reproduction. But further, when human life is imparted by reproduction, it **always** (without a single known exception in all the history of the world), re-

mains human life. This is simply to say that human life cannot be imparted except as human life — that is, human life never becomes anything but human life. But what is true of human life is also true of animal life, fowl life, fish life, etc. All life is thus imparted only by reproduction. And God's law is that everything must reproduce after its kind. No man, living or dead, learned or unlearned, scientist or fool, can point to a single exception to this law in all the history of life.

All this talk, then, about one form of life evolving into another form, by a gradual change from the lower to the higher, is nothing but intellectual nonsense — atheistic tomfoolery, without one smattering of evidence to support it. True, it is widely believed, and that by some of the most learned men in the world, but even if the whole world believed it, that would not make it true. Not at all. Facts are facts, and our belief or non-belief does not alter them in the least. Or to say it another way, believing a lie does not make it true. Paul once asked, "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" He emphatically answers, "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. 3:3-4.)

## IF I HAD A MILLION . . .

It is so easy for most of us to see how much we would do for the Lord if we only had more with which to do it. Most of us could honestly make the following statements:

If I had a million minds I would fill them all with a knowledge of the holy Scriptures — I would know all the will of God it would be possible for me to learn. I would fill none of them with trashy, smooty thoughts or literature.

If I had a million hearts I would fill them all with love and concern for God and others. There would be no room for the love of sin.

If I had a million tongues I would use them all to tell the sweet, sweet story of Jesus. Not one word would be devoted to gossip, profanity, or indecency.

If I had a million hands I would employ them all in the work of Christ and His



church — the work of bringing lost souls to Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Not one would be engaged in destructive purposes.

If I had a million feet I would use them to carry me into all the world to preach the glad tidings of good things, the gospel of Christ . . . and to walk in the paths of righteousness. They would not be permitted to take me to the dens of sin.

If I had a million eyes I would lift them up to see the fields which are white unto harvest — to see the lost, to see the downtrodden, to see the afflicted, to see the troubled, to see those wandering about as sheep having no shepherd. None would be permitted to look with lust.

If I had a million talents I would employ them all in the service of my King, the Lord of glory. None would be expanded to advance the territory of Satan.

If I had a million dollars I would recognize my stewardship as a child of God — it would all be considered His, not mine. It would be used to save souls . . . and make the world a better place to live. Not a dollar would be spent for selfish purposes.

Except for the last named, none of us have a million of these things. We do, however, for the most part, have one or more of each of the things named. Thus the supreme question is not what we would do if we had a million, but what are we doing with what we have?

If one will not devote what he has to the Lord, he would not be likely to devote more to Him if he had it — if we will not devote the \$10 we have to the cause of Christ, then it is highly unlikely that we would devote a million if we had it (cf. Matt. 25:14-29).

## THE TEST OF LOVE

Love is a Christian principle and should be exercised by all toward all. While every Christian will admit the truthfulness of this statement, each one has his own subjective definition, limitations, and bounds to which it extends. This is especially true in the tension created by conservatives and liberals. It seems that the more conservative one becomes the more emphasis he places on duty — the overt demands of love. In fact, conservatism may swing so far that it

loses love in legalism. Following rules may become more vital than the condition of the heart. On the other hand the more liberal one becomes in his thinking the more emphasis he puts on love as the highest and only duty of man. The liberal may swing so far from legalism that love becomes a substitute for obedience. The condition of the heart becomes more important than following the rules, even the rules of God.

Conservatives have no respect for the liberals because in their estimation they have abandoned the concept of following orders (obedience); the liberals have less respect (if possible) for the conservatives than the conservatives have for the liberals. The liberals see the conservatives as cold, emotionless, and rule bound — rendering a joyless service only out of a sense of duty. Thus conservatives strike at the fundamental foundation of liberalism, and liberalism simply cannot endure it — love is not broad enough to stretch over conservatism. The conservatives see the liberals as having thrown to the wind all acceptable (Scriptural) standards. The liberals make their own laws (and can change them at will) and utterly despise anything that smacks of duty or submission, the thing nearest the conservative heart. The two philosophies are poles apart — and love often does not span the space.

But from the tension between the two extremes (both found to one degree or another in the Lord's church today) we should learn a lesson — learn what love really is. Love is the unbounded concern for the welfare of all, regardless of their philosophy or character. It must therefore be deep enough and broad enough to cover those who are on the extremes — to cover one whose conscience is offended at the exercise of liberty or the one whose conscience knows no compunction in going farther than Scripture permits. Love is longsuffering (1 Cor. 13:4). This in no way implies that it approves all the actions, beliefs, or philosophies of its object or that it has the disposition to compromise truth. Far from it. It seeks to correct. The conservative, though he is following strictly what he conceives to be the will of God, may honestly and sincerely try to correct the liberal and

bring him back to the old paths (or he may be glad the liberal is wrong so that it will hasten him down the road of destruction). The liberal, though he preaches love, may actually hate the conservative (or he may want to help lift him to a higher plane of understanding). Either may love or either may hate.

The true test of love is in attitude and action, not in word alone. One may shout love from the housetop, but his attitude and action will reveal his affections, especially toward those who differ with him. The real test of love is one's disposition toward those on the opposite extreme from him.

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# Strength Turned To Weakness

**Dan Williams, Roanoke Rapids, NC**

He was destined from before birth to deliver his people. When he was grown God blessed him with His Spirit and with an awesome strength. He could kill a raging lion with his bare hands, snap strong ropes like thread, or single-handedly defeat a thousand men! So long as he remained true to God, Samson was invincible — the mightiest man on earth!

## Strength Becomes Weakness

Yet the story of Samson is one of weakness, not of strength. The Bible repeatedly warns us that what may seem to be an asset, be it riches, beauty, power, or cleverness, can easily become a liability if it draws us away from God. Samson had a remarkable strength, but it soon became his weakness, in at least three ways.

1. His strength was squandered on revenge. The other judges rescued Israel from her enemies by rallying the nation in battle; Samson, however, waged his own private war with the Philistines. Others fought to save Israel; Samson fought out of a ferocious anger. The God-given powers of Samson were dissipated by an unbridled temper, and consumed by a spirit of revenge.

When the secret of his riddle was uncovered, he killed thirty men in Ashkelon, "burning with anger" (Judges 14:19 NIV). After learning that his Philistine bride had married another, he vowed, "This time I have a right to **get even** with the Philistines; I will really harm them" (15:3), and he proceeded to burn their fields. This kind of immature, schoolyard mentality was typical of Samson. When his brethren came to question his actions he shrugged them off with, "I merely did to them what they did to me"

(15:11).

A "get-even" attitude is still common in the world today, but it is directly counter to the approach of Jesus and His followers! Christians are to act, not react (Matt. 7:12, Rom. 12:21). Not only that, but revenge always escalates. For example, after Samson set fire to their fields, the Philistines took his bride and her father and burned them to death (15:6). Samson, upon learning of this, swore "I won't stop until I get my revenge on you" and viciously slaughtered many of them (15:7-8). They in turn took him prisoner; he in turn escaped and killed a thousand men; and on and on the cycle goes until it ends with Samson and the Philistines lying dead together.

It's no wonder Jesus warned, "All who draw the sword will die by the sword." (Matt. 26:52.) A spirit of revenge destroys both parties. Samson used his power in anger, and it became his downfall (cf. Prov. 16:32).

2. His strength was nullified by evil women. It could be that his great prowess made him attractive to women, and that his head was turned by their attention. But one thing is sure — Samson's greatest weakness was in his choice of companionship.

A woman can either be the best or the worst thing that ever happened to a man, and vice versa. The person with whom we choose to spend our life with will have an enormous influence on us. Other than becoming a Christian, this is the single most important decision we will ever make. Make it wisely!

Samson consistently chose (against his parents' advice — 14:3) the wrong kind of women. His attachments were of the most superficial kind (cf. 14:7, 16:1), and nothing we see in them is appealing. They

were all wicked, worldly women, and even the strength of a Samson evaporated before them. The rendering of Judges 16:16 in the NIV is particularly vivid: "with such nagging she (Delilah) prodded him day after day until he was tired to death. So he told her everything." Samson could defeat any Philistine man alive, but he could not handle their women! Would that Christians today could appreciate the dangers of foolishly entangling themselves with unbelievers (cf. 1 Cor. 6:14-18).

3. His strength was lost through neglect. Samson came to rely more on the gift than on the Giver. Three times the Bible tells us the Spirit of the Lord came upon him with power (14:6, 14:19, 15:14), and each time it rescued him from a bad situation. But Samson began to take this gift for granted, and forgot that it was conditioned upon obedience to God. One of the saddest verses in the Bible is Judges 16:20. It comes after Delilah has finally learned the secret of his strength, and has had his hair cut off as he sleeps in her lap. The Philistines rush in, and Samson, "Awoke from his sleep and thought, 'I'll go out as before and shake myself free.' But he did not know that the Lord had left him."

It is a dangerous thing to receive the blessings of the Lord casually. Such an attitude cost Samson his sight; it could cost us our soul. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10:12, cf. 9:27.) The tragic figure of Sam-

son in chains — blinded, humiliated, grinding meal like an animal in a Philistine prison — is a sobering example of the peril of neglect.

### Weakness Becomes Strength

It is true, of course, that God was still able to use Samson's might to serve His purpose. After all, Samson's violent temper was unleashed, in part, to destroy the enemies of God. His romances, while sinful, were nevertheless used by God to punish the Philistines (Judges 14:4). And even his capture and tragic death resulted in a mighty judgement on Israel's foes. As the author solemnly notes, "The dead which he slew in his death were more than they which he slew in his life." (16:30.)

Perhaps the writer of Hebrews indirectly and ironically alludes to this fact by including Samson among those "whose weakness was turned into strength" (Heb. 11:32-34).

But even though Samson's folly served God's purpose in the end, it was at a terrible price! His disobedience meant that, while Israel was delivered, it was at the cost of his own destruction. The life of Samson is thus a tragic tale of great might but greater folly. He misused his gift of strength to carry out his personal war of revenge, and to carry on his foolish romances. In so doing his strength became his weakness, and ultimately his doom.



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# Loneliness

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

**Loneliness!** All of us understand or will eventually understand the fright, anxiety, depression, and despondency of loneliness. Of all the creation only man knows loneliness. He is called by psychologists the loneliest creature. All feel unwanted and unloved at times. Old people feel they are in the way; young people think they are not paying their way. The rich feel alone with the poor, the educated feel out of place with the uneducated, the good feel alone with the bad, and the prestigious feel awkward with those from the other side of the tracks. Since expelled from Eden man has faced the problem of loneliness. Perhaps the climax came that day the sun refused to shine when Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46.)

**What are the causes of loneliness?** I can think of several and no doubt there are more.

1. **Solitude.** There are times when man should be alone. Part of our anxiety today is our fear of solitude. We are afraid of ourselves. Man must quickly learn to live with himself. The philosopher said, "Know thyself; to thine own self be truthful." Man needs quiet time alone. Jesus went to the mountains to pray. There are times to work and play — and there are times when we must be alone. Yet man is not made for too much introspection! Even God said, "It is not good that man should be alone." (Gen. 2:18.)

2. **Selfishness.** Man is too self-centered! He does not care enough about others. He builds walls when he should be opening doors. He destroys bridges rather than build. We are tactless, unconcerned, yes, even cruel. And we wonder why we have few friends. To have friends you must be friendly. Many who complain the loudest receive exactly what was coming to them. We drive others away. Selfishness is another cause of loneliness.

3. **Success.** Success can be a cause of loneliness. Paradoxical? But true! Fame and commonality do not mix. One comes at

the price of the other. Highly educated people easily remove themselves from the common. A young couple fight side-by-side for success then drift apart when it is theirs. Couples usually marry for one reason — but there must be other reasons that keep them together twenty years later. Success breeds loneliness. Greatness is a part of success. This causes misunderstanding, even hostility. Jesus, at twelve, was misunderstood by His parents. His friends thought He was "mad" and His brethren did not believe. Jesus admitted in Gethsemane "... The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

4. **Discouragement** will create loneliness. Man feels intense loneliness when discouraged. He feels betrayed and deserted. After the triumph at Mount Carmel, Jezebel threatened Elijah with his life. His answer in flight? "... and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." (1 Kings 19:14.) Discouragement fires loneliness.

5. **Daily life itself is a cause of loneliness.** Every day at various times we are tinged with loneliness. Life has a peculiar ability to hem one in. Our responsibilities, obligations, problems, and difficulties build up. We retreat into our private shell of loneliness. Life aids loneliness.

How do we solve loneliness? **A solution will not be found in crowds.** Crowds are fickle and unfriendly. They emphatically teach that you are alone regardless of whom you are with. Being with the bunch does not cure, it may kill. Many suicides occur among crowds. Being with a crowd definitely is not a solution for loneliness. **Escapism is not a solution.** Man flees from loneliness. To get away he tries pleasure, travel, noise, analysis, and so on. He tries and strives only to become more frustrated. He is doomed with his own loneliness.

**A positive cure for loneliness is the church.** The only thing Jesus left on earth was His church. His body of fellowship. Man must belong to, must get involved in, be a part of, share in, and with others. To a degree some of this is fulfilled in marriage,

friendship, and various organizations. But a void still appears deep in the recesses of man's heart. The church is God's fellowship for beggars needing bread. Many simply "join a church," attend when convenient, or make a token contribution, only to be sadly disappointed! Christianity is a total commitment, a total involvement in the hearts and lives of others. The church is never a recipient — it is always a servant. God's church is God's cure for loneliness. One smile or handshake alleviates much loneliness. Would Judas have killed himself if some brother as James or John had rescued him? A part of Peter's salvation was Jesus' prayer (Luke 22:31-34). Barnabas rescued John Mark. There is a tower of strength in brotherhood. Do for others! Give yourself for somebody else! Do good things to those around you. Show interest, kindness, helpfulness, and compassion to your fellowman — as ye sow so shall ye reap! This is true in every situation of life.

**Jesus is a cure for loneliness!** "You never walk alone." This is a unique truth about Christians. "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen." (Matt. 28:20.) A Christian with Christ can never be alone. The key to loneliness is understanding. The cry of those who are

hurt is, "But you don't understand me!" Yet, Jesus does. He knows man because He understands man (John 2:24-25). He knows how it is to be time-bound, tired, thirsty, mistreated, betrayed, denied, and crucified. Jesus knows from first-hand experience. He is with us "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5.) In Gethsemane's darkness Jesus held out His hand for fellowship but Peter, James, and John slept. He knows the hurt of denial. Jesus will never leave us!

**God is the great answer to loneliness.** Jesus said of His Father, "And he that sent me is with me: The Father hath not left me alone: for I do always these things that please Him." (John 8:29.) Paul said in Romans 8, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." Augustine so well said, "Thou has made us for thyself, and the heart never rests until it finds itself in thee." Yes, God is the great answer to loneliness. There are so many pieces to life and happiness a few will always be missing. Dark clouds and dreary days will always come. The great hope against loneliness is heaven; loneliness will never pass through heaven's gates.

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## Have We Offended Anyone?

**Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN**

In the sixth chapter of the gospel according to John, we read of a discussion Jesus had with His disciples and some other Jews. He was telling the crowd that He was the fulfillment of prophecy, and He uttered some prophecy of His own. He told them in verse 54, "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." He continued with the thought, and in verse 60, His disciples said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" Jesus asked them in verse 61, "Does this offend you?" Obviously, it did offend some of them, for we read in verse 66, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with

Him no more."

Jesus' main purpose on this earth was not to keep from saying things that might offend people. He was more concerned with doing the will of His Father. His words were the words of God. He said, "I did not come to bring peace but a sword." (Matt. 10:34.) Jesus' love for people never kept Him from telling them the truth in no uncertain terms. The fact that some of His listeners were offended did not cause Him to water down His message. He preached God's will to a hostile world, and He died preaching that gospel. We have that same message today. Are we so afraid of offending others that we are guilty of keeping the sword of the Spirit wrapped tightly in a sheath of peace?

# Highland Acres To Host 38th Carolina Lectureship

## Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

The 38th Carolina Lectureship will be conducted by the Highland Acres church in Statesville, April 5-9.

Highland Acres church of Christ is the new name of an old established church in Statesville, N.C. When first established by Charlie Nelson of Advance, N.C., in the early 20's, the church was known as the Belmont church of Christ. At first the brethren met from house to house for worship. During the summer months they worshipped under a tent. As the membership grew, land was donated and a meetinghouse was erected in 1930. Charlie Nelson continued to serve the church until 1932.

From 1933-1944 William Clanglon, Elex Eccles, Summy Johnson and Edward Harper came over from Davie and Forsyth Counties to help the young church. Ed Philips from Tennessee served the Belmont church from 1945-1949. He was followed by Quincy C. Carter from Mobile, Alabama, who served from 1950-1964. In 1960, during Carter's ministry a new meetinghouse was constructed and the membership grew tremendously. Also during this time the Belmont church was reproducing itself by planting the Caldwell church of Christ in Newton, N.C. A radio program was begun which is still being heard every Sunday morning at 9:30 on Station WDBM in Statesville.

Earl Dulan from Louisville, Kentucky, served the Belmont church from 1964 to 1966. James D. Harris from Las Cruces, New Mexico, served the church from 1966 to 1973. While working with Belmont, Harris was sent to Nigeria, West Africa, in 1967 for an evangelistic campaign with tremendous results.

Chester C. Vaughan, the director of the 1982 Carolina Lectures, began his ministry with the Belmont church in 1973. Chester Vaughan was born in Bessemer, Alabama, on April 8, 1917. He obeyed the gospel at the age of 27. He served in World War II

and following his discharge from the army in 1946 he entered Nashville Christian Institute. After graduation from the Institute he enrolled in Tennessee State College in Nashville. While a student in Tennessee State he began preaching in Russellville, Kentucky. In addition to Russellville, he served churches in Montgomery and Aniston, Alabama, until 1953 when he moved to the Greenwood Avenue church in Winston-Salem, N.C. In 1956 brother Vaughan moved to Camden, S.C., to establish the church in that city. Thus began a 17-year ministry in that city. While in Camden, Vaughan made two trips to Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa. On his first journey there in 1964 he established the church. His subsequent trip in 1968 there was to help nurture the infant church. Since its beginning the church in Freetown has enjoyed phenomenal growth. On his birthday, April 8, 1973, Chester Vaughan began his work with the Belmont church. Since that time the church has grown in every way. A new building was erected and dedicated in 1981 and at that time the name of the church was changed to Highland Acres church of Christ. The membership presently stands at 230. The church is served by Nathaniel Stevenson, Johnnie A. Scott, Ivey Feimster and George Stevenson as elders and by Daniel Imes and Harold Gillon as deacons.

Chester C. Vaughan married his wife, Lucille, on May 3, 1940. She has been a faithful "help meet" for him. Brother and sister Vaughan are held in esteem by the brethren they serve and by all who know them. More dedicated servants of Jesus cannot be found.

The 38th Annual Lectureship will be conducted in the spacious facility of the Highland Acres church with Chester Vaughan serving as Lectureship Director. Highland Acres will be joined by the other Statesville churches (Abilene, Broad Street and Northview) in planning and implementing the program.



# Carolina Lectures

The 38th Annual Lectureship will be hosted by the Highland Acres church in Statesville, N.C., April 5-9. The theme for the 1982 program is "The Glory of the Church." Speakers from North and South Carolina will be speaking on vital topics related to this vital theme.

In addition to Carolina preachers, Franklin Camp of Birmingham, Alabama, will speak each day on the book of Ephesians. A unique feature of the 1982 program is a planned breakfast meeting from 7:00 to 8:30 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of Lectureship week (Dutch treat) at which brother Camp will speak.

Another unique feature of this year's lectureship is that it is a cooperative effort of all four Statesville churches. While all the lessons will be presented in the Highland Acres building, Abilene, Broad Street and Northview all are sharing in every phase of the program.

Below is the schedule of the 1982 Carolina Lectures.

## PROGRAM

### Monday Evening — April 5

- 6:00-7:00 Registration
- 7:00-7:15 Castle Heights, Winston-Salem, N.C. Singers
- 7:15-7:30 Southeastern Children's Home, R.W. Senn, Columbia, S.C.
- 7:30-7:40 Singing and Prayer — Daily
- 7:40-8:00 The Glory of the Church — Its Establishment, Charlie Harrison, Woodleaf, N.C.
- 8:00-8:05 Singing — Daily
- 8:05-8:30 The Glory of the Church — Its Guide, Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, N.C.
- 8:30-9:00 The Glory of the Church — Its Author, Clois Cecil, Winston-Salem, N.C.

### Tuesday, April 6

- 9:00-9:45 Registration — Daily
- 9:45-10:00 Singing and Prayer — Daily
- 10:00-10:25 The Church in Old Testament Prophecy (Dan. 2:42), John Crosslin, Salisbury, N.C.
- 10:25-10:50 The Parable of the Sower (Mt. 13:3-27), James Jones, Aiken, S.C.
- 10:50-11:00 Break — Daily
- 11:00-12:00 Panel Discussion — The Glory of the Church Through the Media, Donald Wood, Hendersonville, N.C.; Dan Williams, Roanoke Rapids, N.C.; Bill Heinselman, Cary, N.C.; Alvin Bullington, Lenoir, N.C.
- 12:00-1:30 Lunchtime — Daily
- 1:30-1:55 The Preacher and Personal Development: The Power of a Positive Spiritual Attitude, Max Safley, Spartanburg, S.C.
- 1:55-2:20 The Preacher and His Prayer Life, Ron Edwards, Kinston, N.C.
- 2:20-2:30 Break — Daily
- 2:30-2:45 Books, Howard Winters, West Jefferson, N.C. — Daily
- 2:45-3:20 The Book of Ephesians, Franklin Camp, Birmingham, Alabama — Daily
- 3:20-3:30 Break — Daily
- 3:30-4:30 Open Forum, David Pharr, Rock Hill, S.C. — Daily
- 4:30-7:00 Suppertime — Daily
- 7:00-7:15 Highland Acres, Statesville, N.C. Singers
- 7:15-7:30 "Carolina Christian" Howard Winters, West Jefferson, N.C.
- 7:40-8:00 The Glory of the Church: Conditions of Membership, John Bost, Gaffney, S.C.

8:05-8:30 The Glory of the Church: Its Essentiality, Chester Vaughan, Statesville, N.C.

8:30-9:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Head, Floyd Dethrow, Wilmington, N.C.

### **Wednesday, April 7**

10:00-10:25 The Church of New Testament Prophecy (Mt. 16:18-20), Jim Coviello, Winston-Salem, N.C.

10:25-10:50 The Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven (Mt. 13:31-32), Benjamin Barr, Sumter, S.C.

11:00-12:00 Panel Discussion: The Glory of the Church Through Bible School (VBS, Sunday School, etc.), Jerry Senn, Greer, S.C.; Lewis Savage, Elkin, N.C.; Don Turnmire, Clemmons, N.C.; Dennis Johnson, West Columbia, S.C.

1:30-1:55 The Preacher and Personal Development: Overcoming Depression, Gray Flippin, Greer, S.C.

1:55-2:20 The Preacher and His Family, Charles Fетters, High Point, N.C.

7:00-7:15 Thomas Street, Salisbury, N.C. Singers

7:15-7:30 Southeastern Biblical Institute, Dale McDaniel

7:40-8:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Organization, Park Terrill, Boone, N.C.

8:05-8:30 The Glory of the Church: Its All-Sufficiency, Stanley Crews, Statesville, N.C.

8:30-9:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Mission, Frank McElveen, Charleston, S.C.

### **Thursday, April 8**

10:00-10:25 The Called Church (1 Pet. 5:10), Melvin Williams, Rock Hill, S.C.

10:25-10:50 The Parables of the Merchant and Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44-46), Harding Lowry, Mocksville, N.C.

11:00-12:00 Panel Discussion: The Glory of the Church Through Community Outreach, Hugh Campbell, Wilkesboro, N.C.; Wayne Blackerby, West Jefferson, N.C.; Clayton Mitchell, Raleigh, N.C. (Gospel Meetings, Campaigns, etc.)

1:30-1:55 The Preacher and Personal Development: Setting and Achieving Goals, Bill Dorriety, Winston-Salem, N.C.

1:55-2:20 The Preacher and His Church Life, Buford Carroll, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

7:00-7:15 Parkway Drive, Charlotte, N.C. Singers

7:15-7:30 Palmetto Bible Camp, Ernest Thigpen, Brevard, N.C.

7:30-7:40 Singing and Prayer

7:40-8:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Worship, Mike Mobley, Mooresville, N.C.

8:05-8:30 The Glory of the Church: The Christian's Relationship to It, Harmon Caldwell, Statesville, N.C.

8:30-9:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Unity, Jim Gardner, Winston-Salem, N.C.

### **Friday, June 9**

10:00-10:25 The Unmovable Church (Heb. 12:28), Robert Darnell, Mocksville, N.C.

10:25-10:50 Parable of the Net (Mt. 13:47-50), Wayne Walton, Lancaster, S.C.

11:00-12:00 Panel Discussion: The Glory of the Church Through Community Service (Counseling, Seminars, Youth Programs, etc.), William Cannon, Asheville, N.C.; Benny Weast, Raleigh, N.C.; Barry Elliott, Albemarle, N.C.

1:30-1:55 The Preacher and Personal Development: "Where No Man Stands Alone," Tom Bolick, Shelby, N.C.

1:55-2:20 The Preacher and His Community Life, Robert Goff, Jacksonville, N.C.

7:00-7:15 Providence Road, Charlotte, N.C. Chorale

7:15-7:30 Carolina Bible Camp, H.R. Butler, Kannapolis, N.C.

7:40-8:00 The Glory of the Church: Its Destiny, Charles Moore, Charlotte, N.C.

8:00-8:25 The Glory of the Church: Its Relevancy, Johnny Melton, Statesville, N.C.

8:30-9:00 The Glory of the Church: All Spiritual Blessings Therein, David Wheeler, Charlotte, N.C.

# Is Your House In Order?

Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN

Have you ever had company drop in on you unexpectedly? I think this is a situation we all have faced at one time or another. And sometimes we are caught with our houses in less than perfect shape. Perhaps we had been meaning to clean this room, or pick up that room, but for one reason or another, we never got around to it. And though we might apologize, our apologies do not make our houses any neater. We may think to ourselves, "If they had only called ahead of time, I could have had things looking a little better." After all, we want our houses to look nice for company. The problem, though, is that nice is not

always natural. It is easy to get a little lax and just hope that no one drops in — hoping we will not get caught during a down cycle.

But many try to exercise this same luxury when it comes to their spiritual lives. They often live the way they want to, rather than the way they should, and they hope that God will not come calling on them without a proper warning. Some have fallen asleep at the job of being a Christian. But Jesus exhorts us, "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming — lest, coming suddenly, he will find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mark 14:35-37.) Are you ready?

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## Patience

Max Safley, Spartanburg, SC

"Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proving of our faith worketh **patience**. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing." (James 1:2-4.)

Sometimes my observations are faulty, but I am sure I know a lot more impatient people than patient people. In reading there is very little said about the need for patience, and yet we do need it. The Bible says we do.

What does James mean by "patience"? There is in the New Testament a word translated "patience" which means forbearance, longsuffering. But this is not the word used here. In James, chapter one, the word which is used means endurance, continuance.

This word for patience can mean the act of enduring certain trials as seen in 2 Cor. 1:6 and 6:4. James uses the word as a frame of mind. He calls for an attitude of mind and this attitude is one of patient endurance.

There are those in life who can "take a lot," and there are those who "can't take

it." Those who are patient can "take it." The impatient ones "can't take it."

In summarizing James' teaching, we learn that:

1. There is joy through patience. No normal person likes trial and temptation. But joy, to the Christian, is the ultimate result of trials because they prove our faith, and the proving of our faith works patience.

2. Patience is both active and passive. There are trials over which we have no control. Patience demands that we endure them. There are trying situations which can be remedied. Patience demands that we continue to work on a solution.

3. Patience is an on-going, continuing attitude. Being sometimes patient, sometimes impatient is not the mark of a Christian. "Let patience have its perfect work," says James.

4. Christian character is completed through patience. We are "perfect and entire, lacking in nothing" if we have patience.

Is there something missing in your life? Take a long, hard look at your character. It is very possible the thing that is missing is **patience**.



# Preachers Who Kill The Church

**Chester C. Vaughan, Statesville, NC**

The social action that results from true gospel preaching is not like that advocated by some contemporary revolutionaries, who talk of changing institutions and techniques, but nothing more. It goes much deeper, for it deals with sin, which is the cause of our problems in society.

Our society is religiously deceived, frustrated and by the false doctrines and commandments of men and spiritually sick.

There has been a drifting away from the pattern of faith (the one faith) once delivered to the Saints. (Jude 3.)

In reading many books on the subject of church renewal, I find that the denominational preachers have worked hard and long trying to close the gap which has for so long existed between the clergy and the layman. Because of this gap, the success and effectiveness pursued by the denomination and preacher has been, and is still, greatly hampered. Now the preachers of various denominations are seeking ways and means whereby they can correct the sinful errors which they have for so long taught and practiced. At the same time they are trying to protect their pride and status within the particular group.

It is suggested that in the book **Who's Killing the Church?** that the preachers have stereotyped one another and almost every one else and the worship likewise. The trouble is, the old landmark has been left for something else. The basic pattern of the church must remain just as Christ gave it. The organization of the church, the worship and purpose of the church and the converting plan of salvation must remain the same today as it was in the lifetime of the apostles and other early Christians. If that plan and pattern be not followed, then the worship and work becomes vain (Matt. 15:8-9), and unacceptable to God.

The Bible gives us the following identity of such characters who kill the church:

Preachers who love the preeminence (church leaders) (3 John 9). Men who love earthly titles, such as Reverend, Rt.

Reverend, Father, Pope, Bishop, and many other such elevating and distinguishing titles (read, if you please, Matt. 23:1-10; Ps. 111:9; Job 32:21-22).

Religious blind leaders, selfish leaders, leaders in opposition to the gospel of Christ and the work of the apostles, those who preach another gospel contrary to the gospel of Christ. Scripture references: Rom. 16:17-18; 2 John 9-11; Matt. 15:14; 1 John 4:1; Matt. 7:15; 24:11-24; 2 Pet. 1-3; Matt. 22:29; Isa. 9:16.

**from Self-Examination in the Contemporary Church, pp. 36 and 37**

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# Here's The Answer

Howard Winters

To  
Questions  
You've  
Asked

Dennis Johnson, preacher for the West Columbia, S.C., church, asked us to explain further or clarify the item in our "Thinking Things Through" column in the August 1981 issue under the heading of "Law and Atonement." The thought he wanted more of our thinking on concerned what we said about the law (or any law) being unable to save. Were we speaking only of the law of Moses or did we include in the "any law" the law of Christ? We meant any law that stands as a law system. Whether the law of Christ is included or not depends upon what one means by that expression.

Certainly the law of Christ as it now stands and as it is revealed in the gospel is a complete system, and as such it could not be included in our statement, but if one could separate the law of Christ from the death of Christ (and the benefits of the death of Christ comes through obedience to the law of Christ), which in reality cannot be done, it would of necessity be included. Law *per se*, as we pointed out in the article under question, cannot save or justify a violator without the penalty being paid. It can only condemn him. A law that could forgive its violator would nullify its effect — it would be no law at all. But on the other hand, the law of Christ (as the New Testament uses the term?) is a different kind of law in that, under its provisions, pardon is possible because the penalty has been paid by another. In fact the law of Christ is built around the means of pardon, without which the law of Christ would be no more efficacious than any other law. Thus without the death of Christ the law of Christ would be powerless to save. Suppose, for example, a group adopted the law of Christ as a civil law, disregarding the end for which it was designed, the salvation of the soul from sin through the death of Christ, could one keep that law perfectly and thereby merit salvation on the basis of law keeping alone? Or in short, could one be saved by living by the principles of the New Testament without the death of Christ? Of course not!

But the fact about the matter is that one cannot Scripturally separate the law of Christ from the end for which it was given. By obeying the law of Christ (submitting to Him as Lord and Savior) one receives the benefits of Christ's death. The two go hand in hand. Thus when we say that one cannot be saved by the law of Christ we mean that he cannot be saved by means of the law *per se* — the law standing alone. But the law of Christ does not stand alone. It derives its power from the death of Christ. The violator can be justified by the law because the penalty has been paid by another, the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Perhaps this would be as good a time as any to discuss briefly the distinction which should be made between the law of Moses and the law of Christ, that is the difference between law and gospel.

From the inception of the Restoration Movement (largely due to Alexander Campbell's sermon on the law, even before the movement had crystalized, delivered before the Redstone Baptist Association, meeting on Cross Creek, Brook County, Virginia, on September 1, 1816) we have had a far different concept of the law and the gospel than our religious neighbors. For the most part, they see the gospel superimposed upon the law while we see the law as being superceded by the gospel. We see the New Testament as replacing the Old Testament as a rule of faith and practice, as the Old being fulfilled in the New, the Old as a system of law and the New a system of grace.

While we usually have no trouble distinguishing between the law and the gospel when it relates to matters of faith and practice (we understand that both are regulated by the New Testament, not by the Old), we have always had a good deal of trouble making a distinction between the old "law" and the new "law." We are as likely as not to view both systems as law, the new being superior to the old. Some have dealt with this dilemma by denying that the gospel is a law. But this will not do, in view of what

the New Testament plainly says (see Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2). No serious student of the Bible can question the fact that these passages present the gospel as the law of Christ. But in what sense is the Old Testament considered a system of law (by which one cannot be saved) and the New Testament a system of grace (a law by which one can be saved)? When we try to answer this question, tension arises. While we do not have the space to adequately deal with the problem, perhaps the following will throw some light on the subject.

In the final analysis, the law is a system by which a sinner is judged or condemned while the gospel is a system by which the sinner can be saved or justified. Why can one be saved under the one and not under the other, when both are called laws? Let us address ourselves to this problem, which admittedly is not an easy one to solve.

The law (actually any law standing alone) once violated knows nothing but penalty — without penalty law loses its force. But a law *per se* can make no provisions for pardon or forgiveness for the guilty. Pardon, when lawfully discharged, is a remedial act — an act that is designed to correct some injustice that has occurred in the process of trying to administer the penalty justly. Where no injustice has occurred, pardon outrages the law. Pardon, as far as the law is concerned, is an act of justice (applying corrective measures), not an act of mercy (setting aside the penalty of the law). For this reason when a law is violated there is no lawful way to escape the penalty. The only means, therefore, by which one can be justified under law is to either never sin at all or once sin has been committed pay the penalty in full. Since no responsible person is innocent, this means that under law the penalty *must* be paid. But since all have sinned (Rom. 3:9-23), and since the penalty of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), no one can pay the penalty under law and live (eternally).

Under law a violator is under bondage to sin and he has no possible means by which to escape that bondage. In Romans 7:9-23 Paul describes himself when he was in this condition — a sinner condemned under law. He was lost because of sin. He wanted to be saved, to be relieved from the burden

of guilt, but the law offered no means of justification. In this woeful state he describes himself as loving the law and desiring to serve God by it, but he had violated the law he loved (Rom. 7:9) and thereby stood condemned. What could he do? Since the law provided no means of forgiveness, he stood condemned by the very law he loved, wanted to obey, and tried to serve. There was simply no way for him, or anyone else, to pay the penalty of sin under the law and still live. This is why he wrote to the Galatians saying that a law could not be given by which man could be made righteous (saved, justified) (Gal. 3:21). It is the function of law to condemn the violator, not to justify him.

But the gospel, which is also a law by which violators are condemned, offers justification by means other than a system of law keeping *per se*, a means other than satisfying the law by merit. One can be justified by law only by never violating the law or by paying the penalty in full. But the gospel offers a third means of justification, namely, the death of a substitute. Under the gospel all still sin, the penalty of sin is still death, and the penalty must still be paid. But it is paid by another, the death of Christ on the cross. By this means the gospel offers forgiveness or justification without the violator personally paying the penalty (this the law could not do in and of itself). Thus under the gospel the law has been violated by all responsible people, the penalty of violation is death, the penalty must be paid, but the penalty has been paid by the death of God's only begotten Son. He died in the sinner's stead. So when one sins under the gospel, unlike sinning under the law, he has a propitiation for his sins (1 John 2:2). He can now live because the price of sin, the penalty of death, has been paid by another, Jesus Christ the Lord.

But make no mistake about it: one cannot be justified without obeying or appropriating the gospel message to himself. While we are not justified by obedience to the gospel *per se*, there can be no justification without obedience. A failure to obey is to disobey. And certainly no law (not even the law of Christ) could view one as justified who stands in open rebellion to it.



This is unthinkable. The death of Christ is the cause of justification; obedience is the means of it. Both are necessary. And one is not efficacious without the other. Christ died to pay the penalty of sin. We receive the benefits of His death (have His death applied to our account) when we obey from the heart the form of doctrine which has been delivered to us in the gospel (Rom. 6:16-18). The gospel, therefore, must be obeyed in order to have our sins forgiven, but without the death of Christ, the gospel (as a law) would have no more power to

save than the law of Moses.

The difference then between the law of the Old and New Testament systems is the difference in having no means of pardon (in the Old) and having the demands of law fully satisfied in the penalty being paid by another (in the New). The law (any law standing alone) knows nothing but condemnation of the violator — it has no means of justification; justification (by means of the death of Christ) is the very heart of the gospel, the law of Christ.



## Have You Heard . . . ?

David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

The Campus Crusade for Christ International (Bill Bright, President), distributes a small tract entitled, "Have You Heard of the Four Spiritual Laws?" There are some things in this tract that need to be heard, and some other things you would **never hear from the Bible**.

The first three "laws" briefly describe God's love, man's sin, and Jesus Christ as the means God has provided for sinners to be reconciled to God. Each law is documented by Scriptures, and all Bible believers will recognize the validity of the points made.

When he comes to "law four," however, Mr. Bright changes methods. Instead of letting the Bible declare its own directions for "receiving" Christ, he sets forth a plan of salvation which is not found in Scripture. Some of the points are correct, of course, but the thrust of it is false.

First, he misuses Revelation 3:20. The context clearly shows that it was addressed to the church. There is no connection between what is said in this text and in what **alien sinners** are told to do to be saved. While there may be some illustrative value in using Revelation 3:20 in teaching the plan of salvation this is definitely not the place to learn how to be born again.

There is emphasis given on page nine to the necessity of faith and repentance. This is good. But he fails to show that true faith and true repentance always leads to obedience and that this obedience is also re-

quired in order to be saved. (See Romans 6:17-18.)

It is on page ten that the most glaring false doctrine is found. Mr. Bright declares (in bold type) that the way to receive Christ is through prayer. He even suggests a prayer to be prayed by the person who wants to receive Christ. **Where does the Bible ever tell an alien sinner to pray? Where does the Bible record a single case of a sinner receiving Christ in this manner? Where is such a prayer as Mr. Bright suggests even implied in Scripture?** The tract asks, "Have you heard?" You have never heard anything about receiving Christ **by prayer** from the words of the Bible.

Lest someone think we are mistaken, we should remind that passages such as Luke 18:13 and Luke 23:43 pertain to the time before Christ's death and before His New Testament law became of force. Hebrews 9:16-17 shows plainly that it was not until His death that the testament became of force. But after His death it is absolutely in force.

We come, therefore, to the plan of salvation — how to "receive" Christ — that is stated in the New Testament. As Mr. Bright says, faith and repentance were always involved. But "**Have you heard**" what else was involved? In every case of conversion following the death of Christ, the penitent believer was required to be baptized in order to have his sins forgiven and to be saved. Read, for examples, Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27;

1 Peter 3:21. This was baptism in water. See Acts 10:47-48.

Bible teaching about the necessity of baptism surprises people. But this is still what the Bible says. Some people ridicule the ne-

cessity of baptism. But the Bible still says what it says. Many, as with Mr. Bright's tract, simply ignore this Scriptural requirement. But the Bible is right and Bright is wrong.

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## THINKING THINGS THROUGH

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# The Blood Of Christ

We have just finished reading the biography of Leslie Weatherhead, written by his son, A. Kingsley. Perhaps most of our readers never heard of him, and in that they are not, in our judgment, heavy losers. He was a liberal Methodist preacher who lived and preached in London during the first half of this century. And in harmony with all modernist and most liberals, he did not believe in the necessity of a blood sacrifice for sins (in fact, he did not believe in sin in the sense we do). He summed up his belief by saying, "Without shedding of blood is no remission — in our modern view this is not true."

We all recognize immediately that the first part of this quotation is lifted literally from the Scriptures (Heb. 9:22) and the last part is an arrogant and blatant denial of its truthfulness. As is characteristic of all modernist, he sets himself up as knowing more about the subject than the inspired word of God, more even than the God of heaven who has revealed His will in His word. He unequivocally denies that the shedding of Christ's blood was necessary for the forgiveness of sins. This is not an innocent denial. It strikes out the very foundation of God's scheme of human redemption.

To refute this unholy and blasphemous concept, let us look at just one verse of Scripture, a verse which shows beyond any doubt that the death of Christ was necessary for the remission of all sins, past, present, or future. Paul wrote to the Romans saying, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Rom. 3:25.) The propitiation of this verse means the sacrifice of atonement (NIV) or covering

for sins. In short, the blood of Christ is the ransom price that is paid for sin (Matt. 20:28). Blood represents life (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11) and the blood of Christ (the sacrifice of His life) pays man's sin debt. His righteousness is His justice — Christ had to die so that God could be just (keep His word) and still justify the sinner (Rom. 3:26).

But this was not done just for our sins alone. The death of Christ is the ransom price "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." The NIV renders this, "Because of his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished." The ASV says, "Because of the passing over of sins done aforehand." This irrefutably shows that without the shedding of Christ's blood no one, past, present, or future, could be saved from sin. Those under the Old Testament system offered animal sacrifice, typical of the death of Christ, as a partial or temporary measure until the promised seed should come to make the ultimate sacrifice, which would finally and completely purge from sin. The blood of animals could not take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4; 9:11-22), then, now, or ever. It only pointed forward to the sacrifice which would be truly efficacious. If sins could have been forgiven without the death of Christ, then Christ died in vain — His death was unnecessary, and thus a total loss. But the truth is, no sins were finally or absolutely forgiven until Christ died. His blood flowed backward (to all those who had obeyed God's will for them) as well as forward. The conclusion is inevitable: nothing, absolutely nothing, can atone for sins, nothing can pay man's sin debt, but the blood of Christ.

Of course those who trusted God and did His will under the Old Testament had the promise of forgiveness — it was forgiveness

in promise rather than in fact. Forgiveness was therefore as sure as the promises of God. This can be illustrated by the following personal incident:

Once when we lived in a distant city (about 400 miles away) we paid a visit to our parents in east Tennessee. While there two tires on our car went flat. Upon inspection we found they were both bursted. They were beyond repair. We would therefore have to purchase two new tires. But we did not have enough money with us to pay for them, nor did we have it in the bank back home. We revealed our dilemma to a nearby service station manager. He showed sympathy with us. We then told him if he would trust us we would write him a check for the tires and then the first thing after we got home on Monday morning we would

deposit enough to cover it. He agreed to this. We got the tires, gave him the check and went on our way. He held our check until the next Monday, at which time we made the deposit.

Now he had a check with no money in the bank to cover it, but he knew that it was just as good as my promise. If I kept my word he would get his money, though he would not actually get it until the specified time. So it was with God and His people in the Old Testament. He promised them that if they would obey His laws He would eventually provide them the ultimate means of forgiveness. This He did in the death of Christ.

The Bible is right (and that means all modernists are wrong): "Without the shedding of blood is no remission."

## Carolina Church News

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S.C. 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last

Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Raleigh.** Benny Weast, who has been serving as a youth minister at Brooks Avenue church, has announced plans to move to Abilene Christian University in June.

**Hickory.** The two Hickory congregations, assisted by the Lebanon Road church in Nashville, Tennessee, will conduct a week-long campaign this summer.

**Andrews.** Paul Balch is the new minister. He was formerly a member at Hickory.

**Roanoke Rapids.** The church in Roanoke Rapids had 3 baptisms and 3 restorations in December and January. Dan Williams, the minister, reports both contributions and morale are improving.

#### N.C. Baptisms

Westside, Charlotte, 2; Raleigh, 2; Abilene, Statesville, 2; Providence Road, Charlotte, 3; Roanoke Rapids, 3. Total: 12.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**Greenville.** The Northeast congregation has added Don Buck to its eldership.

**Charleston.** Essex Village has announced



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a "State-Wide Youth Rally" for June 4-6.

**Union.** John White is the new preacher.

### **S.C. Baptisms**

Union, 1; Myrtle Beach, 5; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 2; Northeast, Greenville, 1; Newberry, 2; Georgetown, 2; North Charleston, 1; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 2. Total: 19.

### **Charleston, Essex Village**

**BARRY FIKE**, Reporting: The youth at the Essex Village Church of Christ are proud to present a publication free to all churches in the South Carolina area. The title of the newsletter is the "Herald of Youth" and it contains articles written by young people in the area, puzzles, cartoons, essays, and much, much more. All of the material is centered around a theme of the month. It is published once a month and we would like to share it with you. If you would like to become a writer for this publication, the requirements are that you be between the grades of 4 and 12. The articles should arrive no later than the second Sunday of the month. If you have any activities going on in your area, please write and we will publish that also. Any poems, puzzles, and such like, that would go with the theme of the month, would also be welcome.

We want to reach all the youth of South Carolina and we want you to become a big part of it. Many times our youth feel useless and don't take an active part in evangelism. This is one thing that they could do in a short period of time that could be so beneficial to thousands of youth in the Carolina's.

Are you interested? Then do the following:

1. Mention this to all of your youth. If some are interested, please contact me, give me their address and I will personally get in touch with them.

2. Any suggestions that you might have, please feel free to contact me.

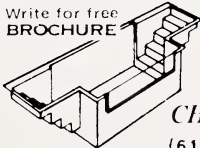
With all the glory given to the Lord, this activity could have some far-reaching effects, if pushed and encouraged. Won't you join me in encouraging our youth to evangelize South Carolina for Christ?

Address: Barry Fike, Essex Village Church of Christ, Savage Road, Charleston, S.C. 29407.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Essex Village Church of Christ is proud to announce its first Annual Youth Rally to be held here in Charleston on June 4-6. The theme of the rally will be, "What's Important in Life?" Our main speaker will be Ben Zickefoose, from Abilene Christian University. Brother Zickefoose is the director of Athletics at the school and does an unusual program entitled, "Gymnastics to the Glory of God." Using several gymnastic stunts, brother Zickefoose adds a spiritual lesson that both young and old can learn by. All are encouraged to attend and gain great spiritual truths from it.

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### **GOSPEL MEETINGS, ETC.**

#### **South Carolina**

Gaffney, Stanley Crews .....	March 21-24
N. Charleston, David Vaughn .....	April 25-30
Rock Hill, Preachers' Workshop .....	May 3
Florence, Roy J. Hearn .....	April 4-7

#### **North Carolina**

West Hickory, David Pharr .....	March 15-17
Raleigh, Neil Lightfoot .....	March 26-28
Jacksonville, Stanley Crews .....	April 25-28

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 4, APRIL 1982



C284.21  
C292



**Building In Hickory**  
(See page 7)



# editorial

## WHERE FROM HERE?

We have written nearly six hundred editorials for **Carolina Christian**. We consider this the most serious one we have ever composed. We wish the conditions which prompted it had never been known to us. But those who ignore fact must suffer the consequences. And we refuse to be silent when the cause we love is being threatened by the forces of evil.

One does not have to be a Solomon to know that something drastic is happening to the church in the Carolinas — so drastic in fact that the very life of the church is threatened. A new spirit has taken control of it, or rather a large number in it, a spirit that is killing it from the inside, a spirit that says in essence that because all are not eyes, or ears, or hands, or feet, or tongues (or whatever the speaker thinks all should be in order to conform to his own human standard) there is no place in the body for them. We seemingly have lost all interest in saving souls and building churches. We have a new mission, namely, forcing all Christians to bow to our dictates and bringing all churches into absolute conformity to our own opinions and standards. Those who refuse, we destroy. We have thus become more concerned with establishing our own selfish concepts than we are with the health of the church of Christ.

From the end of World War II to the middle 70's, we all worked together in the grandest unity we have even known. We had our differences in those days but they were pushed to the background. Each one was burning with a higher mission — the mission of saving the lost. We all looked forward to the day when the church in the Carolinas would be a strong and influential institution, respected within and without. We averaged starting about five new congregations per year. The small churches grew into large ones (e.g., Raleigh, Providence Road, Charlotte Avenue in Rock Hill, North Charleston, St. Andrews Road, Burlington, etc.). There was a slow development of leadership. New works, such as

camp, care of homeless children, a magazine, lectureships, etc., were begun almost annually. Financially one church after another became self-supporting. Those of us who had been on the field for several years became excited because the smell of victory was penetrating our nostrils. We had the devil and his crowd on the run.

But then the new spirit began to invade us. We became distrustful one of another. And that distrust was often expressed in very hateful and unchristian ways. And because of this distrust, we began to see liberals behind every door . . . and in every pulpit. In disregard to congregational self-rule, we began to demand that every congregation either shape up or ship out. We became judges of our Master's servants. We demanded that every preacher, and every congregation, march to our own drum beat. When some refused, we withdrew fellowship. Most ignored this; so we became infuriated and decided that we would show them a thing or two. We started campaigns against liberalism, crossroadsism, false teachers, etc. Every preacher and every church became a suspect — guilty until proven innocent (and no church could be proven innocent until it

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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bowed to our every wish). Great churches, honest preachers, and sincere teachers were branded. At last we had the enemy on the run . . . but the enemy on the run was none other than the Lord's church. We had turned away from fighting the devil and his crowd and had successfully defeated ourselves. We now have the Lord's church on the run. We are winning the battle . . . against ourselves! Where do we go from here?

Only God knows. But our prayer is that we will rise up as one man and expel this evil spirit that we have let possess us, which is successfully destroying us from within, and get back to our God-given mission of preaching the gospel, saving the lost, building great churches, and enjoying the heavenly fellowship that brethren should have. If we do not change our course, and that quickly, the church in the Carolinas, with all the work that has gone into it for over a century, will soon be a thing of the past. It will die at the hands of those who had the mission to save it. And instead of us receiving the reward as builders on that great and final day, we shall be judged as the wrecking crew — a crew that destroyed the very cause it had been sent to save.

## BEYOND DRUNKENNESS

Beverage alcohol is one of the greatest problems facing the American people today — a problem we refuse to admit as a problem. We are fast becoming a nation of drinkers — a nation of drunkards — while closing our eyes to its evils. It is our nation's number one drug problem; it is the third largest cause of death (following heart disease and cancer); it destroys irreplaceable brain cells, thus reducing one's capacity to will strongly and to think rationally; it is the cause of at least fifty percent of all highway accidents, killing 25,000 people (many of them innocent bystanders) each year (a recent report from Nashville, Tennessee, placed the figure at sixty percent for that city); it causes an incredible amount of domestic problems, shattered dreams, broken homes, and divorce; it is our number one waste of wealth — in lost working hours, in reduced capacity, in loss of jobs, in hospital confinement, in prison

sentences (caused by alcohol related crimes), etc. This is actually just a smattering of alcohol related problems. They are so vast, so widespread, that they stagger the imagination. And that does not even mention the vast cost of the habit itself in the layout for the purchase, now standing at about sixty billion dollars annually. It is no wonder then that Dr. Alan Willoughby, a clinical psychologist of the University of Rhode Island and a specialist in the treatment of alcoholism, author of the book entitled, **The Alcohol Troubled Person**, has said:

"We must stop thinking of people as being influenced by alcohol only when they are drunk. Alcohol's effects are much more profound and longlasting than has been previously realized. For a number of days after heavy drinking there are symptoms of anxiety, depression, poor judgment, irritability, over-reactivity, and suspicion — a syndrome that resembles paranoia." (As quoted in **The Burning Bed**, p. 289.)

Thus the problem with alcohol is more than drunkenness. And it is time all Christians recognize this fact and begin the opposition of the liquor traffic for what it is, an evil in the eyes of God, to society, and to those who engage in its unholy consumption.

## CHILDREN

Rearing children is a grave responsibility, one that no parent should take lightly. The Bible instructs, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.) Paul adds, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4.)

This is something that every young person entering marriage should seriously consider. The person one marries becomes the father or mother of his children. Of course we mean more than just the biological parent. The person one marries will influence his children more than anyone else in the world, except himself. That's what parents are for. Thus in marriage, one is not only choosing a mate, he is choosing the one that will most influence his children,

for good or for ill. He is in essence choosing for his children. The right choice can mean all the difference in this world . . . and in the world to come.

God never intended for children to be reared outside a Christian home (in the Christian age). It is therefore the God-given obligation of parents to provide the kind of home God intended children to have. Those who fail here, fail in their duty to God, to the world, to themselves, and to their children. As a general rule, children will be just what their parents lead and train them to be and parents will train their children to be just what they are (in character, disposition, attitude, etc.).

While children are young their minds, hearts, and lives can be molded — they can be trained to both think and do right. But once they are mature, they are much harder to change. Parents, therefore, have an

obligation to train their children in the way they should go. And to do so, they must start early in life — much earlier than most of us think.

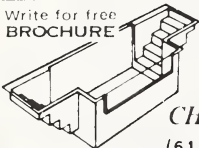
## AVAILABLE

For many years our schedule of meetings has been so tight because of local work that we have not always been able to fill all the request from brethren both in and out of the Carolinas. But because we now have a second man in West Jefferson, we have made special arrangements with the church to accept a few more invitations for meetings each year than usual. Thus we are available for a limited number of meetings, weekend engagements, or for special series on the Holy Spirit, Romans, or other subjects of interest for the remainder of this year and for the foreseeable years ahead. Those who are interested in our service may contact us at P.O. Box 117, West Jefferson, NC 28694 or call 919-246-4011. We will do our best to work you into our schedule.

## WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM WRITING?

From time to time **Carolina Christian** comes under criticism because of the limited number of writers which appear in it, especially in certain issues. Why do we use such a limited number of writers when there are so many who could write and perhaps do a better job than those who do? The answer is simple: they are the **only** ones who write. We have no staff writers, neither do we request items except in special issues. We therefore depend upon those who volunteer their service. Some do . . . and others complain because they do.

The pages of **Carolina Christian** has always been open to any Christian in the Carolinas who will write positive and constructive items designed to inform, to promote the cause of Christ, or to teach the truth. In fact, our policy has always been to use Carolina material first and only when there is not enough available do we turn to out-of-state writers. Furthermore, we have a "share the space" policy within the Carolinas. This means that a new writer or one who writes infrequently is given prefer-



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ence to the regular contributors. This way everyone has an equal chance of getting his material published. We have not refused more than a half dozen items since becoming editor, and in each case they were so liberal or displayed such an ill spirit that we could not in good conscience use them. The paper was started and has been kept alive for the purpose of promoting every good work among us. We count on those associated with each work to do the promoting. It is the only way we can operate. But it is not now, and never has been, the purpose of the paper to try to solve all brotherhood problems, correct the errors of all the brethren, or brand everyone we cannot bring into line. The Board of Directors

long ago established the policy of calling no names, identifying no churches, or specifying no people in an effort to refute errors or false doctrines. We teach the truth in a straightforward and positive way and we believe that is enough to refute every false way.

Thus if you are not satisfied with the number who write for **Carolina Christian** (and the editor is not), then what keeps you from writing? The paper is as much yours as it is anyone's and you have the same rights and obligations to it as others. (Incidentally, this editorial was written as a filter at our printing deadline because someone failed to fill the space that was opened to them!)

---

## Cigarettes: Lives Going Up In Smoke!

**Rubel Shelly, Nashville, TN**

It bothers me that the American Cancer Society has more to say about encouraging people to "kick the habit" of something so harmful as cigarette smoking than pulpits, Bible class teachers, and church papers. Why is that?

Maybe you are inclined to say that smoking is not a "spiritual matter" and pertains only to physical health and well-being. If so, you have too narrow a view of what constitutes a legitimate concern of the religion of Jesus Christ! Since the body of a Christian is a "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19), anything that relates to its use and/or abuse is a moral and spiritual concern. If smoking is genuinely harmful to the body, Christians have no business using cigarettes and ought to be using our collective voice to discourage others from doing so.

Every year the Surgeon General of the United States issues a report to the nation about health. For the past several years, the annual message has called attention to the dangers of cigarettes and has identified smoking as a threat to American people.

The 1982 Surgeon General's Report says: "Cigarette smoking is clearly identified as the chief preventable cause of death in our society and the most important public

health issue of our time." Pretty strong language! But it is backed up with some pretty impressive data.

Dr. C. Everett Koop, a prominent Philadelphia pediatric surgeon, before his appointment as Surgeon General, said at a press conference that tobacco is "responsible for some 340,000 deaths in this country annually." It is estimated that about 111,000 persons will die of lung cancer due to smoking this year, and another 18,000 will die of other forms of cancer (e.g., mouth, throat, etc.), which trace to smoking. Then another 110,000 or so people will die of heart disease, chronic respiratory problems, and other ailments caused by the use of tobacco.

We are even finding out that those of us who do not smoke are paying a price by being exposed to the exhaled cigarette smoke of people around us. For example, two studies have been done that show an increased risk of lung cancer in nonsmoking women who are married to smokers. Many public buildings now prohibit smoking in corridors, elevators, and other crowded places.

For anyone who smokes, the best way to give up the bad habit is by going "cold turkey." Some 30 million people have stopped smoking since 1964, and most of

them did so by quitting entirely rather than trying to "taper off" their cigarettes.

If you smoke, think seriously about your responsibility to glorify God in your body.

You know smoking doesn't contribute to that. Pray for the strength of heaven, and lay down your cigarettes!

## Choices In Religion

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

The typical modern approach to religion is to accept and practice anything which seems suitable to the individual. There are numerous religious groups which offer a wide variety of beliefs and practices. It appears that a great many of those who affiliate with these groups do so merely upon the basis of personal likes and dislikes.

Of course each person must make his own choice in religion. But upon what basis should he make this choice? Is there an absolute standard by which we may certainly determine what is right? Or is right determined solely by the preferences of an individual? Is one thing right to one person and something else right to another?

The absolute standard of authority for Christianity is the Bible. While we believe that each person is free to make his own choices, we must insist at the same time that the only right choices are those which are based upon the Bible. Our own preferences, feelings, opinions, and prejudices may seem right to us; but they are not the true standard. Only God's word can guide us in religion. Read Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; and Matthew 7:21.

It will be observed, however, that almost all religious groups in our part of the world claim to follow the Bible. The thinking person recognizes, though, that it is strange

that there are such great differences when they are all supposed to be guided by the same book.

Obviously, we cannot accept everything simply because someone claims it is in harmony with the Bible. We must recognize that God has not given us a book to confuse us. Instead, by using the Bible in a rational way we can determine what is the truth.

**First, we must recognize that the Bible does not teach anything which it does not say.** It may seem unnecessary to emphasize this; but keep in mind that there are many claims of Bible authority when no passage is actually named. Make a practice of insisting on book, chapter, and verse.

**Next, we must recognize that a passage can only mean what the Spirit-guided writer intended for the words to mean.** Proper interpretation of Scripture is simply determining what the writer was saying. A passage cannot properly mean one thing to one person and another thing to another person. It has but one meaning and that is the original meaning. It is folly to seek to twist the meaning of Scripture to suit one's own ideas.

**In the third place, we should seek to learn all the Scriptures teach on any specific subject.** The worst violation of this principle is in the practice of citing a few passages to prove an opinion while ignoring other passages which treat the same subject. The Bible does not contradict itself. We cannot choose certain verses and say, "These are my verses. I reject other verses which do not agree with my interpretation of these." All that the Bible teaches must be understood as a harmonious unit.

In churches of Christ we are committed to the Bible: the whole Bible; and nothing but the Bible. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Our friends are invited to ask for Scriptural authority for all that we teach and practice.

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# Developing A New Testament Church From "Scratch"

**Frank Maynard, Hickory, NC**

Mission work is a challenging call. Simply put, it means "to embark upon a set mission, purpose, or plan." Generally, we associate "mission work" with overseas or foreign works that require extreme hardship and adjustment to our own ways.

It is because of this misconception of mission work that many areas of our continental United States have gone unattended with criers of the good news. Sometimes we have even left unattended **certain** sectors of a city, because that city already had a church of Christ.

Having observed this limitation of outreach within our fellowship, it is especially gratifying to be a part of a Lord's body that would take such a problem to task. It was not undertaken by a large Tennessee or Texas congregation, nor with the bountiful funds that many have to immerse into mission work, or even one with large numbers with enthusiastic mission committees. It was the result of a small (145 attendance) Western North Carolina church which had been itself struggling financially. The Hickory church of Christ (est. 1947), under the oversight of four elders, stepped out in faith, believing there was a need, at the right time, with the right help. It was, indeed, a test in New Testament commitment.

On January 25, 1981, the birth of the "West" Hickory church of Christ was begun by nineteen adults (34 counting children) in an old store front building which consisted of a large glassed, open room, one large back room (partitioned into two classrooms), and **one** restroom. Heating (when working) was oil duct, which cost more during the winter months than the monthly rent.

It was readily seen by the men of this congregation that plans and goals were the first manner of business. A plan was set forth to locate land for future expansion, erect a simple building to supply as a base of operations, and the beginning of an evangelistic outreach that could be felt by

all the people in this community (Greater Hickory Metropolitan population is 70,000).

Two months later, there was located two acres of prime land, priced right, and strategic to transportation arteries crossing the city. In a sacrificial aura of faith, the nineteen members comprised of factory workers, widows, housewives, and businessmen raised the necessary \$3,000.00 down payment and secured necessary financing on the balance with the owner.

On September 24, 1981, a building program was begun that would call for a simple brick and block building of size 40'x80', consisting of two restrooms, six classrooms, baptistry, auditorium for between 100-150, and centrally heated and air conditioned. The building was completed on December 23rd, and our first usage was **that** evening for weekly Bible Study. Our first service was December 27, 1981, with a record attendance of 69. Final construction cost for building and improvements totalled \$53,000.00.

The minister, Frank Maynard, was previously a missionary to Argentina, and has been supported financially to some degree by the Hickory church of Christ for the past six years. He is a graduate of White's Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies, W. Monroe, Louisiana, and the Sunset School of Missions in Lubbock, Texas. He holds the Master of Arts degree from American Christian Bible College in W. Monroe, La. He is married to the former Ramona Zapata, a native of Argentina, and the Maynards have three children, Michelle (14), Franky (10), and Amy (9).

In 1982 the Hickory church of Christ will have to curtail approximately one-half of its previous financial assistance due to economic stress within its own organization. Starting in February their support will be \$800.00 per month to this mission effort. The brethren at West Hickory, however, have not let their faith be tarnished, and the Lord has continued to open other doors to



assist in their cause. The Lebanon Road church of Christ in Nashville, and brother Stanley Pharr, also of Nashville, have combined to assist West Hickory \$500.00 per month for 1982. The Providence Road church of Christ in Charlotte, NC., was also able to help on a one-time basis. Presently, the brethren at West Hickory are

struggling to raise an additional \$200.00 monthly to handle their financial commitments.

Brethren, rejoice that another body of the New Testament church has been created, **not** as a result of division, but rather of planning, of faith, and of an abiding commitment to the cause of Christ.

## THOUGHTS TO PONDER

# The Elder Son

**Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC**

“And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him.” (Luke 15:28.)

Many sermons have been preached on the parable of the prodigal son, but relatively few on the elder brother. The Lord intended that the facts surrounding each son should teach a lesson. It is obvious from that which is said in the first part of the chapter (Luke 15), that the primary lesson had to do with the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, on the one hand, and the self-condemned publicans and sinners, on the other. The principle underlying the Lord's teaching is not limited to that occasion; it is equally applicable to us today.

Why did the elder son refuse to go in? (1) He did not have the right attitude toward his younger brother. It is altogether possible that he never thought very much of him in the first place, since it seems that their natures were quite different. It appears that the younger son was overly generous and was always getting into trouble somewhere; whereas the elder son was a pattern of sobriety, and was as cautious as he was laborious. (2) Not only did the elder brother not love the prodigal; it seems that he could not understand why anyone else should love him either. He did not understand his father's ways. The elder brother no doubt thought that he loved his father, and had always honored him. But now, in the light of that which was being done in honor of the wanderer's return, it seemed to him that his father's justice was being dissipated.

The elder brother got his information and impressions from the wrong source. (1)

He should have gone into the house and seen for himself. One look at his brother might have softened him and changed his whole outlook. But instead of going in he called one of his servants and asked him what was going on. (2) It is true that the servant told him the truth about the matter, but it sometimes happens that even the truth can be told in such a way as to irritate and cause suspicions in one's mind.

Some things he missed by not going in. He missed the merriment and gladness. As it was he was out of touch with everybody, and was filled with jealousy, and was offended and miserable. He missed his chance of making others happy. He may not have realized it, but his absence was the one shadow which lay across the feast.

He showed his true status by not going in. One of the best ways to see the true character of a person is by means of contrast. The darker the night the brighter the stars will shine (2 Sam. 12:1-6). The younger son had deliberately left home, squandered his resources, and wound up in the hog field. He knew he was a lost sinner. But the elder brother had remained home in a clean and wholesome environment. He did not feel that he was lost. But he was out of sympathy with his brother and his father. While the younger brother came home and was restored, the elder brother remained unresponsive to the final appeal of his father's love.

One of the great lessons illustrated by this parable involving two sons is that of repentance. The conduct of the younger son shows what repentance is, while that of the elder brother shows what it is not.

# The Son, And The Oath Of God

## Part 1

Glenn D. Martin — Elizabeth City, NC

From a study of the Hebrew letter, through Hebrews 5:10, one can understand that the Son of God has been placed against the background of Hebrew history to the point where the nation of Israel was seen as an established, God-given government, around a system of worship to God with a mediating priesthood. And in Hebrews 5:11-6:12 the writer turns aside to a section, in which he uttered inspired words of warning against the peril of apostasy, or against the refusal to obey God's will spoken by the Son. Inspired words of warning, which I believe constitute the two main reasons why the book of Hebrews was written.

The first reason was to encourage faltering Christians, who were on the verge of apostasy. And the second reason was to show the utter absurdity of forsaking Christianity and turning back to Judaism. Now, as to what I believe to be the first reason, the writer says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are full of age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:12-14.)

Now what was true of them could also be true of Christians today. One can either be studying first principles, the ABC's of the matter, or you can be a teacher! You can be a "milk drinker," if you want to, or you can be a "meat eater"! It is up to you. It was up to them back there in the first century. So, without noticing any division in the chapters, look at 6:1: "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." Now, the word perfection, here in this con-

text, does not have reference to heaven or the glory world, but is simply pointing up the fact that those Hebrews, who had obeyed the gospel of Christ, needed to look in the right direction, and move in the direction of a better understanding, or a more perfect knowledge of the will of God as it applied to them!

Then, let us look at 12:1-3 where the writer exhorts, beginning with the last part of verse one: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." And, the rendering of this, by some translations, makes this passage read: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of **the** faith, not **our** faith, but **the** faith, which is the gospel, or as Jude would say in Jude 3, "The faith which was once delivered unto the saints." You see, therefore, if we will look at Jesus hanging on His cross, we will see the import of this passage! So the Hebrew writer said, "Looking unto Jesus," not back toward Moses, "but stay under the gospel principles and don't revert to Judaism!" Then, continuing with 12:2-3, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher (or the beginner and finisher) of **the** faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Now, what is the point? "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." (Heb. 12:4.) How far did our Lord, Jesus Christ go to make possible our redemption? To the cross, shedding His blood! So the writer said to the Hebrew Christians, "Before you throw in the sponge, or raise a white flag — consider Christ!" You have never even shed any blood in defense of New Testament Christianity, so move in the right direction! Move in the direction of perfection, of a better knowledge, and a better understanding of the principles of New Testament Christianity!

And that, I believe, is the first reason for the writing of the Hebrew letter, to encourage those who needed to be encouraged. There is nobody ever lived who did not need, at some time or other, to be encouraged. Here is what the writer had said about encouragement, in Hebrews 4:13-16: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Now underscore that **time of need!** In other words, what we need in time of crisis is available and this time of need is a time of crisis! It is a need that you must have, that you must receive! This is the meaning in the original. All right, here are the faltering Hebrew Christians who need some help: who need some encouragement. They need somebody to help them, to motivate them, and that is what the Hebrew letter is all about!

The second reason, I believe, was to show the absurdity of forsaking Christianity and turning back to Judaism, and you might ask, "Did anybody ever want to go back to Judaism?" Look at Galatians 4:21, "Tell me ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" And that means do you

observe the law? If you have that desire, then you are under obligation to observe it! And then Paul exhorts Christians in Galatians 5:1-3, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." As Paul had said before, one must observe the whole law of Moses!

"But beloved," the writer continues, "we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. 6:9-12.) So with that statement of encouragement, the argument goes back in the history of the Hebrew people, to Abraham, and the writer returns there for a definite purpose!

He returns to that point where God spoke through angels, and to the particular hour in which He made His final appearance to Abraham in connection with the offering of his only son, Isaac! And, the quotation from Genesis 22:16-17 is given here, Hebrews 6:13-15, and when we return to the account as it is given in Genesis 22:14-19 we find that God had said to Abraham, "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore: and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Therefore drawing attention to the fact that God said this, on oath, "By myself have I sworn," saith the Lord. (Gen. 22:16). The Hebrew writer was drawing attention to the fact that God said this — **on oath!** Also, that which God asserted on oath was that His counsel was immutable, and that the one thing that remained certain in the history of man, was the immutability of the counsel of God!

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# Stealing Our Guide

Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC

The Bible is our only guide in religious matters, the only source of divine revelation. Paul wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17.) Peter said, "According as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:3-4.) But the devil is doing all in his power (and make no mistake about it, he is a power to be dealt with in this world) to steal that guide from us.

In one of Dr. Russell H. Conwell's public addresses (Dr. Conwell is best known for his famous lecture on *Acres of Diamonds*), he tells of going with a party up Mr. Ararat. The way was hard and dangerous and cold and some of the party wanted to go back, but others wanted to go on and reach the top. The guide was finally persuaded by a bribe to go back. The few who wanted to go on could not without a guide. Dr. Conwell said, "It was a mean thing to steal our guide, for we could not go on without him and he was the only guide we had."

But to steal the Bible is infinitely worse than to steal an earthly guide. Following are some of the ways the devil is currently using to take the Bible from us:

1. **Unbelief.** While a vast majority still believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God (at least to some extent), unbelief is on the increase throughout the world. Communism is an illustration of this. Consider also the fact that Godless evolution makes man nothing more than a hairless ape, an accident of nature with no eternal spirit. According to evolutionists, man is nothing but material, an accidental selection of

atoms that for some unexplainable reason cling together. And since man did not come from the hand of God, and since he has no purpose here, and since he is going nowhere but to the gloom of the grave, the Bible is just a record of the religious experiences of ancient and primitive people, never meant to be more than a devotional guide. Hence unbelief steals man's only guide to spiritual matters, his only source of information from the Creator's mind.

2. **Liberalism.** Liberalism is a philosophy of religious unbelief — an effort to salvage the best in religion while denying its divinity and authority. Liberals reject the Bible as divine revelation and rely upon their own intellectual powers of reason and logic to determine the will of God (if indeed they believe in God at all), right and wrong, truth and error. But by the time they get through removing all that is not acceptable to their process of intellectual reasoning, there is nothing of value left, no divine word from the Lord, no moral standard to live by, no infallible source to give directions for salvation, no hope for a future home with God — no higher source of knowledge than man himself. Liberals thus steal the Bible as our guide and tell us, falsely, that man who walks must direct his own steps (cf. Jer. 10:23).

3. **False doctrines.** While in the Bible the doctrine of Christ is simply the teaching of Christ (and the teaching of Christ is the gospel of Christ and the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe it, Rom. 1:16), the concept of doctrine among religious people in general is something far different from this. And this false concept minimizes, willingly or unwillingly, the importance of believing the truth, the doctrine set forth in the Scriptures. It is commonly believed, though not widely verbalized, that doctrine is a minor matter, and for this reason the Lord has left it up to each group to decide upon and settle its own doctrinal dogmas as each sees fit. In this view, the Bible does not bind doctrine — doctrine and saving faith are two dif-

ferent things entirely. This concept completely ignores the fact that the Bible itself (that which was delivered by inspired men) is doctrine (cf. Acts 2:42; Gal. 1:6-9; Jude 3). Thus any false doctrine that is preached, believed, or practiced replaces in our hearts and lives the true doctrine set forth in the Scriptures. False doctrine, therefore, steals the Bible from us as our only guide.

4. **Indifference.** Indifference more subtly steals our guide that unbelief, liberalism, or false doctrine. While the indifferent profess to believe and love the Bible (and perhaps they do to some degree), they do not follow it — they care nothing about obedience to its divine precepts. They seldom attend services of the church; they give little or nothing to support the cause of Christ; they

make no effort to win others, to alleviate needs, or to keep up the work program of the church — they let other things crowd out the things they should be most concerned about. They do not care whether the light of truth shines through them or not. They steal from the world the Christian life that would be lived if they followed the Bible. They steal the guide by stealing the results of following the guide.

Only an enemy would steal one's guide. The devil is our arch enemy, and his prime effort is to take away the Bible as our only source of directions. Since we are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11), let us be on guard lest the devil replaces the Bible with weak philosophy, false doctrine, or human tradition.

## Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?

Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN

In the fifth chapter of John, we read of a man who had had a certain infirmity for thirty-eight years. Jesus came along and saw the man, and in verse six, He asked him a question: "Wilt thou be made whole?" What a strange question for a man who had been sick for so long — would you like to be well? But Jesus saw it as a question worth asking.

Many people today have been made "sick" by sin for so long that they do not want to change. And unless the desire to change comes from within, they will remain

just as they are. As Christians, let us never lose our desire to continually be "made whole" by the Great Physician.

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# Courage In That Lonely Hour

**Max Safley, Spartanburg, SC**

It must have been a lonely and dismal hour when the Apostle Paul wrote the words: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8.) What was it that gave Paul his tremendous courage under trying circumstances?

One thing that gave Paul courage was the knowledge that even though all others had forsaken him, the Lord was still by his side. When Jesus gave the great commission, after telling the disciples to preach the gospel throughout the world and to baptize those who had been taught, He promised, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20.) This solemn promise of the Lord when He said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5), sustained the Apostle Paul and gave him courage. Paul's attitude seems to have been: if doing right means all others forsake me, then it is better to be alone with God.

Another thing that gave Paul courage: he could never forget his task of proclaiming Christ. Paul is an embodiment of his own teaching when he said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." (2 Tim. 4:2.) Whether he was in a Roman courtroom or chained to prison walls, he was always preaching the message of Christ. He was so busy serving Christ that he forgot the danger. One who is lost and immersed in his work has conquered fear, and I'm confident this is another factor that gave Paul courage.

Paul was courageous also because he was absolutely certain of his ultimate salvation. He could look beyond time and know that he would receive eternal safety. It is always better to be in danger for a moment and safe for eternity than it is to be in security

for the moment and to jeopardize eternity.

May we take courage from this example of courage, and may we find courage in these same reasons that gave Paul courage.

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## CROSSROADS ISSUE

The most popular and far-reaching issue we have ever run of **Carolina Christian** was the June 1981 number on Crossroadsism. Hundreds of request for additional copies have been received from all over the nation. The articles have now been reprinted (not the whole issue) and are available for distribution. 20¢ per copy (plus postage), \$15 per hundred.

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# Why People Fall — Pride

David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18.)

The principle stated in this proverb applies in all areas of life, but we want to make a special application in regard to falling away from Christ and the church.

Why do people fall? Why do people leave the church? (Anyone who leaves His church leaves Christ.) There are various reasons, but pride and a haughty spirit would frequently be involved.

People fall away because pride makes them resent correction. People do not like to be told they are doing wrong. Words of chastisement are seldom appreciated. Pride says “I’m not going to listen to this. No one is going to tell me what to do.” (See Prov. 1:7.)

Pride keeps people from confessing sins. A person who has been unfaithful, who has brought reproach on the church by sinful conduct, etc., needs to make a public confession. A reasonable way to do this is to come forward before the church. But pride keeps some from doing this. Pride says, “I’m not one of those who has to go forward. I won’t humiliate myself like that.” (See James 4:8-10.)

Pride makes some ashamed of Christ, His word, and His church. As people become exalted in their own minds — because of their money, or prestige, or culture, or education — they begin to feel uncomfortable with old-fashioned religion. The songs aren’t like the fashionable churches sing. The preaching is too narrow and simplistic. Pride says, “I don’t like being identified with narrowmindedness in the eyes of the world.” (See Mark 8:38.)

Even changes in habits may be resisted because of pride. For example, there is teaching and exhortation about attending all the services. The conscience may even be pricked. But pride insists that “If I start attending all the time now it will look like the preaching really got to me.” So what? The Lord would say that’s good. Pride says,

“Don’t let people know the message hit home.” (See Rev. 2:4-5.)

A congregation is a cultural, economic, and educational mixture. The Bible shows that such differences mean nothing in Christ. But pride makes some feel too superior for associations with some. The refined friends of the world (in spite of their sinful ways) is to be preferred. Thus pride weakens fellowship with God’s people. (See Rom. 12:16.)

Sometimes one drifts and falls because he does not get his own way. Pride reminds him of all he has done in the past. But as the church grows and situations change, he feels left out. Pride says, “I guess they don’t need me anymore.” “If they don’t want my advice, I won’t give my money either.” So pride drives a wedge and the seeds of apostasy are planted. (See Matt. 20:26-27.)

Pride sows discord among brethren. There are those who whisper, backbite, and slander. They make it their business to find fault. In fact, some are so proficient in this that there is hardly anything or anyone in the church they have not found reason to criticize. This no doubt has behind it an underlying sense of inferiority. But pride requires a cover up. Pride says, “Always find fault with others so that attention will be drawn away from all that is wrong with you.” But this eventually catches up with the person and then pride says, “It’s better to leave the church than to admit what you’ve done.” (See Prov. 28:25.)

All such pride is exceedingly sinful. It is the exact opposite of the teaching and example of Christ. Yet the world is proud of its pride! People say, “I have my pride.” And though numerous other excuses may be offered, the real problem behind many who leave the church is their pride. And to come back would cost them this pride. For some it is too big a price to pay.

Will pride be a consolation in hell? In torment will one lift up his eyes and say, “After all, I did have my pride?”

# TV And Immorality

**Max Patterson, Henderson, TN**

When immorality is portrayed or discussed on TV (or anywhere else) in such a way to legitimize immoral behavior, then such discussions must be considered wrong.

The argument is made, "Are we not free to read and see what we want to see?"

Legally this may be true. However, people are not legally free to sell whatever they want to sell. Just as we have freedom of speech, guaranteed by the constitution, but not free to slander, or curse someone out, so we are not free to sell anything we want.

A grocery store cannot sell rotten meat. It could be argued, "If people don't want to eat it, they don't have to." In the same way the TV and movie industry should not be allowed to sell rotten TV or movies. It is not legitimate to argue, "They don't have to look at it." Or, "They can change the channel." The air waves belong to the people, not the TV networks.

What about this business of people just shutting off their TV when something questionable is on? In the first place, just as people don't buy food to throw it away, so people don't buy TV sets to turn them off. In the second place, half of the people in America watching TV are children. Most of these children are not in a position, unsupervised and without responsible adult judgment, to make right viewing decisions.

I can't believe, since television is a major cultural force in our society, that there are those who think they have no responsibility to decency and morality. Obviously TV is a great molder and shaper of values and beliefs. It is unthinkable that the decision of what is going to be shown be left in the hands of greedy executives whose only motive is profit.

For those who think sex is a beautiful gift from God that belongs in the marital bed, and who cherishes family life and the worship of God, things like homosexuality, profanity and other irreverence, drinking, promiscuity, violence, etc., causes a cringing, and a vexing of the spirit.

Some things I resent about television:

1. **The biased programming against Christians, Christian values, and culture.** For example: NBC is planning to air a major ministries next spring based on the book **Princess Daisy**. The theme of this book is to depict the sexual activity of its characters: a 32-year-old woman seducing the son (14 years old) of her good friend; a brother-sister sexual relationship; two women having an affair.

2. **The failure to present Christian family life, and Christians as warm, intelligent, considerate people who make good contributions to our society.** TV has purposefully censored out this positive aspect of our culture.

3. **The attempt to change the values that have been dominant in our society.** Let us face it! What is at the stake is a media that is controlled by humanists who want to change the old value system to a new value system of "anything goes" and "do as you please." Unless we stand up now, we certainly face a future where the media and many other aspects of our society will be controlled by atheism and amorality. This will be the time when your children will be taught that there is no right and wrong so long as you have consent.

4. **Violence.** Probably television, as much as any other cause, promotes violence in our land. There has now been research done which documents the ill effects of TV violence on society. Do you remember 30 years ago when we could walk the streets at night, and seldom locked our homes and cars? What will it be if the situation continues to deteriorate at the same level the next 30 years?

An example of how far along we have gone with immorality, and how brazen some have become:

California is at the present time considering showing five state-financed public service commercials that say there is nothing wrong with being homosexual. The commercials have already been made and are narrated by Ed Asner, Mike Farrell, Abigail Van-Buren, and Jack Albertson. The commercials say, "If you are homosexual, you

are not alone, and there are support groups."

"Keep thyself pure," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is

abomination," were not put in the Bible just to fill up space. What this teaches is in direct contradiction to what is being shown in movies and in the living room. The time to act is now!

# What Are You Looking For?

John Waddey, Knoxville, TN

Joy and peace, happiness and contentment; these are the word-symbols of life's most beautiful experiences. If one could package and seal them with a guarantee that they would work, he would be an instant millionaire. In every generation, the world around, men and women are diligently searching for the key to these blessings. Observation tells us most are unsuccessful. Sadly, ours is an unhappy race. The daily news is one long recital of violence, misfortune and death, broken lives and suffering.

Is there no hope? Are there no answers? Are we doomed to misery? Paul the apostle joyfully tells us he had found the secret that allowed him to be filled while hungry and to abound while in want. His discovery was, "I can do all things in him (Jesus) that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:12-13.)

Long ago, the wisest man who lived upon earth, set out on a search for meaning, purpose and happiness. Like many, he sought these without God and failed. Only in his later years did he discover that the prize he had vainly sought had long been at his

doorstep — unclaimed. Solomon's story is related in the twenty-first book of the Old Testament, called Ecclesiastes. This grand book is seldom studied and oft misunderstood, yet its message is immortal. The lessons in this book are based on Solomon's experience. They will help you to properly understand where meaning, purpose and happiness can be found. You are encouraged to read Solomon's story through. Your reward will repay all your effort.

Should you want a sneak preview of Solomon's golden discovery — why not open your Bible to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 and read his conclusion. May God bless you as you follow the divine map to his priceless treasure.

*We search the world for truth; we cull  
The good, the pure, the beautiful  
From graven stone and written scroll,  
And, weary seekers of the best,  
We come back laden from our quest,  
To find that all the sages said  
Is in the book our mothers read.*

— John G. Whittier

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

## **Warren Resigns From Tennessee Bible College**

**Cookeville, Tenn.:** In a recent news release Thomas B. Warren announced his resignation from Tennessee Bible College, citing the advice of his doctors to limit himself to only one job as the reason for his resignation. In the release Warren stated:

"Five years ago I had a heart attack and heart by-pass surgery. Instead of doing what my physicians told me to do (to work at only **one** job), as soon as I was able I foolishly resumed working on a number of jobs. Just recently, after a series of tests and consultations, my physicians strongly advised me to work at only one job. So, I have resigned my work as professor, Dean of the Graduate School and Executive Vice President of Tennessee Bible College. I am now confining my work to full-time writing. It is a source of sorrow to me to have to leave Tennessee Bible College."

Brother Warren's writing will be concentrated in the areas of apologetics and the Christian life in addition to the completion of other books already in progress.

## **Woodson to Lipscomb**

**Henderson, Tenn.:** It was recently announced by both Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson and David Lipscomb College in Nashville, that William Woodson, chairman of the Bible department at FHC since 1971, has resigned that position and will join the Lipscomb faculty in September of this year. Woodson will be helping to develop the new graduate program in Bible at Lipscomb. He joined the FHC faculty in 1959 and was the acting chairman of the Bible department before his appointment as chairman. Dowell Flatt, a member of the FHC Bible faculty for a number of years,

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*"This would be a better world if everyone were as good as he wishes his neighbor was."*

---

will succeed Woodson as the chairman of the department.

## **Caribbean Literature Campaign**

**Antigua, West Indies:** There is a great need for English literature for all the West Indian churches, which are financially unable to buy literature of their own. Needed are: Bibles, religious books, Bible school materials, tracts, charts, workbooks, religious journals and periodicals, recorded cassettes and personal evangelism aids. Any churches wishing to may send the needed materials to: Roger Dickson, P.O. Box 7, All Saints, Antigua, West Indies.

## **More Trucks to Poland**

**West Monroe, LA** — Another food delivery to the Christians in Poland is scheduled for April 24 with more than fifty drivers participating in the trip. The food will be bought with the money contributed last fall for the relief of our Polish brethren. The April convoy will be larger than the much-publicized thirty-truck convoy of October 5, 1981.

## **Over 30,000 Baptisms Reported in 1981**

**Houston, Texas** — According to Gospel Services, Inc., 1,328 congregations responded to a recent church growth survey. The questionnaire used in the survey was mailed to approximately 9,000 congregations in the United States. Those congregations responding to the survey reported a total of 30,621 baptisms in the United States last year. Of those churches responding 113 reported between fifty and ninety-nine baptisms. There were four churches reporting more than 200 baptisms and twenty-one reporting 100 or more baptisms. According to the survey the church in Jacksonville, Florida, with Charlie McClen-don as its preacher, baptized 341 people into Christ.

# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Wilkesboro.** T.R. Bryan, Jr., and Fred Watkins, Sr., have been appointed to be elders.

**Jacksonville.** A Youth Rally is planned for May 14-16 with the theme: "Be Thou an Example." Robert Hall of Wilson will be the featured speaker. Other plans for the year include: Stanley Crews, April 25-28; Bob Rigdon (Marriage Enrichment), August 8-11; and Vacation Bible School, July 12-16. Robert Goff, Jr., is the regular preacher. They have a regular radio program and newspaper column.

**Statesville.** The Northview congregation has announced that Ken Koko of Freed-Hardeman College will be working with it this summer.

**Raleigh.** The following report is taken from the Brooks Avenue bulletin:

Brooks Avenue has had an outreach to Polk Youth Center since before 1970. In the beginning, a number of families and individuals acted as community volunteers taking out various inmates on passes. This

was done on a regular basis for several years, and started at the request of the authorities. Several have been baptized through this work.

Recently, Ed Woodhouse was given the oversight of the Brooks' prison ministry and we now have nine members of the congregation who are involved in planning and carrying out this work. Future budget funds will be allocated for Bibles and literature and possible expansion of our efforts to the other local prisons is being considered. We ask God's help in a difficult ministry.

**Charlotte.** Our sympathy is extended to David Wheeler in the recent death of his father. (This was also the grandfather of Terry Wheeler, Duncan, SC.)

The Youth Advance at Providence Road was very successful with over 1,000 in attendance from several states.

### N.C. Baptisms

Salisbury, 1; Fayetteville, 1; Raleigh, 3; Abilene, Statesville, 2; Mooresville, 1; Brevard, 1; West Jefferson, 1; Broad Street, Statesville, 1; Providence Road, Charlotte, 10; Hickory, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 3; Jacksonville, 1; Northview, Statesville, 1. Total: 27.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Duncan.** Three additional deacons have been appointed, bringing the number to five, with three elders. Terry Wheeler is the

## GOSPEL MEETINGS, ETC.

### South Carolina

Clinton, Several Speakers	April 25-30
Rock Hill, H.A. Fincher, Jr.	May 23-28
Gaffney, Johnny Melton	May 30-June 2
Essex Village, Charleston, Youth Rally	June 4-6

### North Carolina

Cary, Youth Rally	April 16-17
Jacksonville, Stanley Crews	April 25-28
Charlotte, Westside, Dan Lightfoot	May 9-14
Jacksonville, Youth Rally, Robert Hall	May 14-16

minister.

**West Columbia.** Harvey Allen, formerly of Bennettsville, is now working full time with Dennis Johnson and the West Columbia congregation.

**Greenville.** Another deacon has been appointed at Edgewood.

**St. George.** PREACHER NEEDED: For application and information write to St. George Church of Christ, P.O. Box 516, St. George, SC 29477.

### **S.C. Baptisms**

Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 3;  
Georgetown, 2; Northeast, Greenville, 2;

Central, Spartanburg, 3; Myrtle Beach, 3;  
Washington Avenue, Greenville, 2; Duncan, 1; Newberry, 2; North Charleston, 4.  
Total: 22.

### **Washington Avenue, Greenville**

BILL SMITH, Reporting: We reached our Sunday 11 a.m. attendance goal and one week later our Wednesday night goal. Three weeks later we reached the new goal for Sunday. We are now above our '82 budget.

Seven have responded this year, two of these to put on Christ. When in Greenville, visit with us.

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## **Editorial Book Views**

**Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Teaching of Jesus and Paul**, Maurice W. Lusk, III; Guild of Scribes, 1551 Runnymede Rd., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30319; 183 pages, paper \$6.95.

Here is a book that **must** be read and studied by brethren everywhere. It was written for a two-fold purpose: to exegetical set before the reader the teaching of Jesus and Paul on the subject matter and to serve as a model or handbook on exegetical procedure. For the latter reason it may appear to some to be too scholarly to be practical. But not necessarily so. For all serious students of the Scriptures it is preeminently practical. It challenges one to think. It is divided into five parts: part 1 is an exegetical analysis of Matthew 19:1-12; part 2 is designed to show that all men are amenable to the authority of Christ; part 3 is an exegetical analysis of 1 Corinthians 7:1-17; part 4 exegetically analyzes 2 Corinthians 6:14; and part 5 is an appendix consisting of seven essays by various authors on what constitutes marriage. By the exegetical method, the author in nearly every part plows some new ground (at least for us) and offers many insights heretofore not considered. For this reason most (especially those who thrive on exposing such) will find minor details with which to differ, but very few will be found who will argue with the major thrust. While it is too scholarly (in our judgment) to ever widely

appeal to the masses, it is undoubtedly among the most outstanding contributions yet to be made on this subject. And for those who are willing to do some relatively hard reading and some serious study, it will repay rich dividends. His definition of adultery is worth many times the price of the book. His conclusion on 2 Corinthians 6:14 should be seriously considered by everyone, especially those who believe that this passage prohibits a Christian from marrying a non-Christian. No books that we have read has given us more insight or cleared up more problems than this one. We therefore give it our highest recommendation, not because we agree with everything it says but because it is a serious and sincere effort to find and set forth the truth as it is revealed in the holy Scriptures. Those who overlook it will deprive themselves of some of the best material available on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

All books reviewed here may be ordered from Carolina Christian Bookstore, P.O. Box 8324, Sta. A, Greenville, S.C. 29604.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 5, MAY 1982



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C292



**Twenty Years in Fayetteville  
(See page 14)**

# editorial

## CONSUMING OURSELVES

In the context of liberty from any who would bind on the people of God human laws, judgments, or opinions, Paul, whose hand was guided by the Spirit of God, wrote: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." The NIV renders this with more force and clarity: "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." (Gal. 5:15.) This simply says that if brethren keep on biting and devouring one another there will come a time when there will be nothing left for them to devour: they will have consumed each other. While they should be fighting and consuming their common enemy (the forces of Satan), they fight and consume themselves. When this happens, only one thing is possible — destruction!

No one who is informed as to what is going on within the churches of Christ in general and the churches of Christ in the Carolinas in particular, will question the fact that Paul accurately and precisely described us. We are by our fault-finding, nit-picking, and refusal of fellowship with those who differ with us in any matter, whether doctrine, practice, judgment, or opinion, consuming ourselves. Brethren, rather than loving, trusting, and working with one another in the common cause of our Lord, as the Lord intended that we should, have turned upon each other with enough venom to poison the whole world. There are very few churches which are vigorously trying to carry out the Great Commission, fewer of the preachers who have worked and sacrificed to build the church in the Carolinas to the point where it is today, and perhaps fewer still of the programs of work designed to advance the cause of Christ which have not come under attack by someone for some reason and on some grounds other than Scriptural. Ironically we seemingly have forgotten how to fight the enemy and have turned our weapons upon ourselves — we are fighting

the very cause we are supposed to be building.

We have spent all the years of our adult life teaching and defending the truth in every possible way at our disposal (and we plan to spend the remainder of our days on earth doing the same), and while we believe that this is our mission in the world, we also believe that some of the current efforts of fault-finding, nit-picking, and character-assassination over matters of judgment and opinion are utterly and absolutely unscriptural and antiscritptural, contrary to everything the Lord of glory taught, opposite to everything the Spirit-filled apostles revealed, totally different from the practice of the early church, and a barring and branding by means and for reasons never before known among us. Some have become so super-sound that they cannot endure those whom they consider less sound than themselves (which in the final analysis is everyone). They feel compelled to bite and devour them. But if their course is pursued to its logical end, to the extreme to which some are currently trying to carry it, it will consume all of us. The church cannot survive in such an atmosphere. If churches are to live and grow, and if brethren are to work together in peace, harmony, and uni-

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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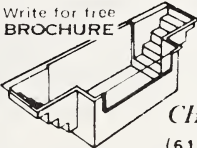


ty, they must be permitted to breath freely of apostolic air — to be bound where the Scriptures bind and to be free where the Scriptures give freedom. Christ is Lord. We are His servants. And to Him we must all answer.

While every man must preach the truth as he sees it, and compromise of any essential truth would be criminal on the part of any of us now, as well as at any time in history, we must learn to make a distinction in the truth that is clearly stated in God's word and in our own conclusions, judgments, opinions, and conjectures. Trouble rarely comes over truth; it usually involves personalities and matters of expedencies. Thus we cannot help but wonder if some of the efforts put forth to correct "error" is not motivated by envy rather than by love. We have no desire to be judges, but we simply cannot read 1 Corinthians 13 and conclude that love would be guilty of doing some of the things that are being done among us by some in their efforts to be defenders of the faith, teachers of the truth, correctors of brethren, guides of all the churches, and judges for Christ. But if the actions are not motivated by love, what then? Is it envy? We suggest that a first step in the solution to our problems would be for each of us to do some deep soul-searching, a lot of praying, and some serious evaluation of our attitude toward brethren and churches. If we do not, and if we keep on going in the direction we are headed, we may find ourselves opposing that which the Lord supports, condemning that which He approves, hating that (or him) which He loves, and destroying that which He gave His precious blood to save. In short, if we do not take heed to our means and methods, regardless of how sound we may consider ourselves, we may end up being guilty of consuming (destroying) the church for which Jesus died. When it is consumed, we will have been successful in destroying ourselves.

We have read the story of a man who had some very valuable fox hounds. One day, as hounds are known to do, they got into a violent fight and were literally chewing each other to pieces. He tried to separate them but had no success. He then began to grab them by the legs and throw them in all

directions. But each one would return to the fray as soon as it hit the ground. His effort seemed futile. But then he conceived a plan: he had a fox in a cage; he took it out and turned it loose near the dogs. When the dogs saw the fox, they forgot their fight and immediately started chasing it. So it should be with brethren. Our enemy, the devil, is loose and all our energies should be devoted to his destruction, not to ours.



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# The 38th Carolina Lectureship

**Howard Winters, West Jefferson, NC**

It is now history, but it will live on in the hearts and minds and lives and faith of God's people in the Carolinas for many years yet to come. The 38th annual Carolina Lectureship was hosted this year by the Highland Acres church in Statesville, N.C. It was an event of grandeur and to say the least, it must be ranked with the very best series in the long and eventful history of the lectures. Some things about it were truly historic:

1. It was hosted, for the first time, by a predominately black congregation. While there has been no segregation in the lectures during our 20 years of association with them, we were still thrilled to see the Highland Acres church conduct them. We believe that it will go a long way in helping us understand and appreciate each other. There is so much that blacks can contribute to whites, and perhaps whites may be able to contribute something to the blacks, but this cannot be done until we come together in some practical way. In the church, prejudice is almost a thing of the past, but we must still learn to work together. We all have the same Father. We have all obeyed the same gospel. We are all working for the same cause. We are all going to the same place. We must now learn to walk hand in hand. We are one! Thank God!

2. The lectureship was a cooperate effort of all four churches located within the city limits of Statesville. While it was hosted by the Highland Acres church, Broad Street, Abilene, and Northview all shared equally in the obligations, as well as planning and conducting it.

3. While the Carolina Lectures have always been a brotherly gathering (never have they been used as a springboard for hobbyists or the platform for the views of any individual or group of individuals) of people of like precious faith, this year was the most brotherly of them all. The spirit of love, trust, and cooperation permeated it from the first speech to the last. There was not a sour note sounded or a negative ap-

proach taken during the whole week. No one was disrespected or branded because he held different opinions on matters of expediency or judgment. The truth was taught in no uncertain terms. Compromise would have been contrary to everything said or done.

4. Many young preachers were used. The Lectureship Committee had chosen about 50 speakers from both states and had selected a balance rarely achieved between the more mature and well-known and the young and inexperienced. To indicate the broad spectrum of the choice of speakers, perhaps more spoke on the lectures for the first time than in any previous year. Young preachers were featured in the night sessions (when the largest number is in attendance). Yet nothing, absolutely nothing, was lost (in fact, many things were gained). Every speaker, young and old, and all in-between, did himself and the cause of Christ proud.

5. The unity and working relationship among the churches, and especially the preachers (Chester Vaughan, host preacher, Harmon Caldwell, Stanley Crews, and Johnny Melton), were evidenced in every activity. While the churches in Statesville have had their problems in the past (as all churches do), they are at peace now and are working in perfect harmony . . . and growing. We have long believed, and this lectureship served only to confirm our faith, that the church in Statesville has the potential of becoming the stronghold of churches of Christ in the Carolinas. Time will tell. But they are certainly displaying the kind of spirit that builds strong active churches.

6. The largest attendance in history characterized the day time sessions (and this is probably true of the night sessions as well).

There were many other marvelous and profitable features of this year's lectureship, far too many to take space here to record. Those who missed it missed the best fellowship and association heaven has to offer the earth — the fellowship and association of fellow Christians and fellow

laborers in the kingdom of God.

The 39th annual Carolina Lectureship will be hosted by the St. Andrews Road

church in Columbia, S.C., the first full week in April 1983. Make your plans now to be a part of it.

## THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN

# Submissive — To Be Or Not To Be

**Sara Kemp, Gastonia, N.C.**

Since this generation of young women are growing toward young womanhood under the influence of the NOW (National Organization of Women) group and the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment), more and more emphasis and teaching needs to be done on Ephesians 5:22.

When God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden, it was His plan for man to till the soil and woman to bear children. Adam was to be the leader, Eve the follower. Probably no other area of marriage is misunderstood, ignored, and abused as is the area of submission. Webster defines submission as, "The condition of being submissive, humble, yielding or compliant." Submission is an attitude. It is not so much what is done but the attitude in which it is done.

A woman must, in order to fulfill her role of submission, have a humble attitude toward her husband and his position. Even though God has given a leadership role to the husband, that same husband is himself in submission to Christ and God. A wife's submissive attitude toward her husband's role in the marriage reveals her spiritual condition. When she is submissive to her husband, she is in reality in a submissive state toward God. "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands **as unto the Lord.**" (Eph. 5:22.)

Submission indicates a continuous action, a way of life. A wife never stops submitting to her husband and his role of leadership in the home. When submission is a voluntary action on the wife's part, it becomes an act of love rather than a state of "slavery." Many women who are very conscientious about their Christian service and

the teachings of the Bible, will many times completely ignore and reject God's teachings on submission.

When a woman is submissive to her husband, she is playing the game of life by the rules — God's rules. Women are to be totally dependent on their husbands in the same way that the church is totally dependent on Christ. When we as women learn to respond to our husband's God-given leadership roles, then we will enjoy the protection and fulfillment in our own roles that God intended for us to have. When the wife is no longer the responder and gets between her husband and God in a position of leadership, her fulfillment is denied.

**Remember, submission is not an option — it is a command of God.**



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# Orthodoxy = "My-Doxy" Or "Your-Doxy"?

Maurice W. Lusk, III, Atlanta, Ga.

*(Orthodox is from the Greek word orthodoxos meaning "right opinion/thinking." It is a compound of orthos = right and doxa = opinion/thinking, which results in the meaning "right opinion/thinking"; hence the title of this article which translates: Right Opinion = "My-Opinion" or "Your-Opinion"?)*

A letter recently received from a good brother in another state raised the question of how I felt about brethren making my position on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as set out in my book **The Indwelling of Deity**, a test of fellowship. It seems that this was being done in his area. I was very appreciative of this brother's letter and sent a response along to him. I have had this question raised several times to me, more so with reference to my book on **Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Teaching of Jesus and Paul** than the other. At the encouragement of several of my colleagues here at the Biblical Institute, I am giving the gist of my view on this question here in article form.

## "Do You See What I See?"

Concerning the matter of "to fellowship or not to fellowship," I was concerned in the publishing of this book that someone may see my work as an attempt to state the "orthodox position" on the subject. My intentions were to work through a very complex doctrine utilizing whatever tools and skills of exegesis at my disposal in an effort to remove some of the ambiguity surrounding the terms involved in the ongoing discussion concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. My conclusions are those conclusions I have come to in keeping with what I accept as "adequate evidence." I am fully aware that the evidence may not be convincing to others, and that others may see different conclusions warranted by the evidence they have before them. I expect them to be no more bound by my conclusions than I would allow myself to be bound by theirs.

One should never develop the habit of

letting someone else think for him/her. The question in any religious discussion should be not "who is right" but "what is right." I know that there are those who think that all brethren must think as they think in order to be "orthodox" or "sound." Orthodoxy can too easily become "my-doxy." Nothing could more quickly effect a denominationalizing of the Lord's church.

## "Deliver Us From Traditionalism!"

The Son of God came here two thousand years ago to deliver us from enslavement. Part of the system of enslavement He found Himself opposing was the enslavement of tradition. From what we see in the gospels (especially the Sermon on the Mount), the traditions were the Rabbinic teachings (oral traditions) on the correct meaning of the Scriptures (cf. "you have **heard**" as opposed to "it is **written**"). For us to write books or ascend the podium and pronounce (or pontificate) what is to be believed in order to be sound, faithful, or orthodox in matters of doctrine is to fall into the same autocratic mentality as those "orthodox brethren" of Jesus' day, who were clearly convinced that He was an "enemy of the faith," even liberal with reference to the keeping of the traditions of the fathers — and truly He was!

Our educational philosophy here at the Biblical Institute (and a philosophy I heartily endorse), is that we attempt to teach our students "how to think" not "what to think." Then they do not have to read books to see what they are supposed to think, rather they will read books to glean data from which to draw their own conclusions; then authors will have to prove their case not simply state it, if they expect to be taken seriously. This business of stating "positions" that one must accept or be branded as "in error" is precisely what Jesus withstood in His dealings with the official religious spokesmen of His day; God forbid that we should fall into the same practice. May the Lord deliver us from such systems of traditionalism! And such a plea seems all the more urgent today in that so many among us seem so intent on leading

us in this direction: we must all use the prescribed version of Scripture, preach the same sermons (i.e., those which reflect "sound doctrine") over, and over, and over, and over. And above all, we must bring out the "war drums" at the slightest sound or original thinking, after all we must all speak the "same thing" (to quote Paul out of context).

When I claim that all brethren must see things alike in order to be faithful, then I propose an hypothesis which will surely divide and destroy rather than unite and heal. I am convinced that no two mature brethren think alike on all matters of Biblical doctrine; and what (or whose) criterion would we use in determining the perimeter of fellowship? What to some are essential matters of doctrine are to others nonessential matters altogether!

### Concerning Matters of Excommunication

It appears to me that all matters of excommunication (disfellowshipping) found in the NT have to do with overt acts of rebellion or defiance against the will of God (e.g., dividing or destroying church unity, acts of open immorality, etc.). If we withdraw from one another on the basis of correct thinking versus incorrect thinking, we will have to disfellowship one another periodically as we outgrow one another in maturity and understanding. Whenever I come to an insight I cannot convince you of, must I disfellowship you? And would

we not have to declare a moratorium on new converts until they reach an age where we can disfellowship them?

Let me sum up by saying that I **do not** suggest that any brother/sister not agreeing with my position on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (or marriage, divorce and remarriage) is unfaithful, unsound, or unorthodox. I simply think that he/she does not think as I think, and that is all! I indicated in my book **Indwelling of Deity** that such an experience as conflict in our thinking may be healthy, depending on the way we react to it; it is out of such situations that a "catharsis" (i.e., cleansing, purging) of our thinking often occurs.

I appreciate very much every brother/sister who reads my books and learns something from them; but my accompanying plea is they not go beyond the intentions of their author.

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# The Rich Young Ruler

David Vaughn, Burlington, NC

In Battle Creek, Michigan, in the 1950's and early 1960's, an old gentleman roamed the streets with a homemade wheelbarrow, broom, and shovel. He swept the streets and then went some place to sort through the collected trash, keeping that which he thought to be of some value. Regardless of how adverse the weather conditions were, this man could be seen moving through the streets from the earliest morning hours until approaching darkness. He was very poorly dressed; wearing the same clothing, at least outwardly, in the winter months that he wore in the summer months. He lived outside the city limits in a one-room wooden building. There was no running water. He had a homemade stove and papers were fastened to the inside walls for some insulation. In the early 60's, the man died. Medical personnel said malnutrition was a contributing factor. There were no known relatives. Local authorities went to his house to look through his personal items before burning the building. In his house authorities found over \$200,000 in cash and bonds. This man had plenty of money, but he had a need far greater than his money. Perhaps, it was an unrealized need, but nevertheless, it was a real need. This is, of course, an extreme example.

There are many wealthy individuals who realize their need for something other than money. One such young man talked with Jesus. His story can be read in Matthew 19:16ff, Mark 10:17ff, and Luke 18:18ff. From reading the three gospel accounts we know this man was rich, young, and a ruler. By our standards this young man would "have it made." **Plenty of money** — no financial worries. We must remember, however, that God warns that riches can be deceitful and harmful. He was a **young man** — able to get out of his chair without the creaking of joints. The years of youth are indeed a great period. In this time of life, God says, "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth. . . ." He, as a **ruler**, had power, position, and influence. But

even power, without direction and purpose, is meaningless.

Centuries before this young man talked with Jesus, there lived another man who also possessed great wealth and power. He was the "son of David, king in Jerusalem." (Eccles. 1:1.) This king (whom I believe to be Solomon), says, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The king's despair jumps out at you as you read the book. In reading Ecclesiastes, we notice the phrase "under the sun." This phrase, in effect, draws a line between heaven and earth and leaves out of consideration all that is above that line; meaning that he is leaving God out of the picture of life. If you view life without God, then life is vanity. When man leaves God out of his life, the void cannot be filled with riches, youthfulness, nor power.

Mark writes that the rich young ruler ran to Jesus, kneeling before him, asking, "Good teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" This young man must have been respectable. Today he would be listed in the "Who's Who." But even with his riches, youth, and power, he realized a far greater need — eternal life. All that he was and possessed could not provide that need. He believed Jesus could give him or help him find that which he needed. Oh, if the world would just believe this! Let us notice the question he asked, the answer Jesus gave, and the terrible choice the young man made.

## The Question

"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" A very thought provoking question. A question that should be on the lips of everyone. The question is just as relevant today as it was in the first century. It is important because Jesus taught that man, created in the image of God, will live in eternity, either in God's heaven or a devil's hell. That makes the question the most important question anyone could possibly ask. The young man thought he was prepared to do whatever necessary to have eternal life.



## **The Answer Jesus Gave**

Jesus reminds him of certain commandments. The young man responds by saying he had not committed adultery, he had not killed, he did not steal, nor lie. This is why we can say he was respectable. He was not a harmful person. However, Jesus reminds him that he needs to do something for man. No one can live for God without serving. Jesus told him to "sell your possessions, give to the poor and follow me." It is important to remember that Jesus did not require everyone to do this same thing. Jesus knew this man's wealth was a hindrance in his service to God. Jesus told him that to have eternal life, God must be loved and regarded above everything else. If Jesus were to look at our hearts, what would He see as most important to us? Money? Jobs? Position? Education? Pride? Family? What ever it is, it must not take precedence over God.

It is interesting to notice this young man accepted the answer Jesus gave. We wonder why he did not say, "I want to be saved like Elijah was saved, in a fiery chariot." Rather foolish — yet when some are told to repent and be baptized, they say, "The thief on the cross was not baptized, and if

he didn't have to be baptized, neither do I." We do not know if the penitent thief was or was not baptized. It matters not. Jesus told him he could be saved. That is enough. Jesus has also told us that we can be saved. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." The young ruler did not argue with Jesus about the terms of eternal life — the text says he went away "exceeding sorrowful." In so doing:

### **He Made a Terrible Choice**

To reject our Lord's counsel on any matter is a terrible decision. When the man asked Jesus about eternal life, he certainly asked the right individual. Jesus is "the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh to the Father but by me." The apostles preached that salvation could not be found in any name except the name of Jesus. Paul argues that in Christ we are heir of the promise God made to Abraham (Gal. 3:26-29).

The rich young ruler had a decision to make and he believed the cost to be too great. Lord help us to be faithful enough to always seek divine answers and then make the application in our lives.

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# **The Proclamations Of The Supper**

## **Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

There are many monuments and memorials around the world which stand as witnesses to the greatness of human achievements and the strength of the human spirit. When we think of such monuments our minds may wander to the majestic and mysterious pyramids of Egypt, the breathtaking Taj Mahal of India, and in our own land the memorials to Lincoln, Jefferson and Washington. These monuments and myriads more stand as elaborate and expensive tributes to the memories of mere mortals and with time will tarnish and decay, but the greatest and most enduring memorial of all consists simply of a piece of bread and some fruit of the vine. The Lord's Supper is a living memorial to the

One who has forever changed the course of human history. This simple supper, which we have the privilege of celebrating every first day of the week, proclaims the three great truths that are the sum and substance of Christian faith.

### **A Proclamation of the Lord's Death**

It was the night of His betrayal when Jesus sat down with the apostles and instituted what Paul would later call the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20; Matt. 26:26-30). Jesus' action on that occasion is best understood when viewed in light of its Old Testament background. The Lord's Supper is to be understood in the context of the Jewish Passover. The Lord's Supper itself began as an observance of the Passover according to Matthew, "And the

disciples did as Jesus appointed them; and they made ready the passover." (Matt. 26:19.) The Passover commemorated the night the angel of death went through the land taking the firstborn of the families of Egypt, but passing over those homes that had the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the doorposts (Ex. 12). It was God's command that the blood come from a lamb that had no blemishes. We therefore understand the Passover on that night to be anticipatory of the death of Christ and in the Lord's Supper, Jesus pointed to Himself as the true Passover Lamb and to His death as the saving event which would deliver the new Israel, the church. Jesus knew that He was going to die when He said of the bread, "This is my body" and of the cup, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." Writing to a church that had made a mockery of the memorial meal, Paul wrote, "For as often as ye eateth this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26.) The Christian must ever be reminded of this simple but profound proclamation of the Lord's death as he partakes of the Lord's Supper. To partake undiscerningly is to profane the most sacred monument of Christianity.

The bread and the cup convey the historical reality of Christ's death for us. As we partake, we are reminded that His death, in which He willingly shed His blood for us and bore our sins in His body, was an actual event and we proclaim our faith in the efficacy of that sacrifice.

### **A Proclamation of His Resurrection**

We do not normally think of the Lord's Supper as a proclamation of the resurrection of Christ, but in the Scriptures the death and resurrection of the Lord are inseparable realities. Without the death of Jesus there could be no resurrection and without the resurrection His death is rendered meaningless and ineffective and the Lord's Supper is reduced to an insignificant ritual. Furthermore, the resurrection is implied in the words "till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Jesus could not come again if He were still dead. Thus, the implied proclamation of the Lord's Supper is that not only

has Jesus died, but He has also been raised. In the Lord's Supper we do not honor a dead hero, but worship a living Lord!

### **A Proclamation of His Return**

Finally, the memorial meal proclaims the second coming of Christ, which is a cardinal doctrine of Christian faith and the object of the believer's hope. Once again we note Paul's statement to the Corinthians, "Ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." Paul means to say that from the night on which Jesus was betrayed until the time of His glorious return at the last day this proclamation of His death is to be made. However, as we proclaim Christ's death by our participation in the Lord's Supper, we are also at the same time proclaiming our belief in His promise to return (John 14:1-3). Paul offers nothing concern-

Continued on page 18

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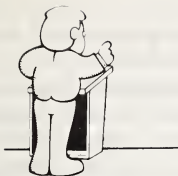
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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited by  
Johnny Melton



## Biographical Sketch



Gray Flippen is a native of Obion County, Tenn. In 1939, he married Mary Evelyn Johnson and they moved to Plymouth, Mich., where Gray worked for the Ford Motor Co. While in Michigan, they were

faithful members of the Plymouth church. In 1952, they made the decision to work full-time for the Lord. Gray quit a secure job and he and his family moved to Hen-

derson, Tenn., where Gray enrolled in Freed-Hardeman College.

After finishing three years at Freed-Hardeman, the Flippens have worked with churches in Marion, Ill., Barnesville, Ga., Sterling, Ill., and Union, S.C. In 1981, they moved to Greer, where they now work for the church there in cooperation with Jerry and Brenda Senn.

The Flippens have two daughters, Peggy (married to David Senn), and Susan. Peggy and David have two sons, David and Jonathan.

---

## Sermon

### **"Ye Have Stayed Long Enough At This Mount" Deut. 1: 6-8**

**Gray Flippen, Obion, Tenn.**

**Introduction:** The God of the universe is a God of purpose. He has a clear and fixed purpose for all that He does. Notice how this is true of Israel and the church.

#### **Discussion:**

##### **I. God's Purpose for Israel.**

A. Expressed in the words to Abraham, "And in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed." (Gen. 12:3; 22:18.) (1) It was through Abraham's descendants that God would keep His name alive and prepare the world for the coming of Jesus Christ. (Gal. 3:16.) (2) To accomplish this, Abraham's seed must develop into a great nation, receive a national law, and be placed in a land located in the very heart of the then-known world, Palestine.

B. After 400 years, Israel (over 2 million strong), rested at the foot of Mt. Sinai. They stayed there one year and received the law, a sanctuary, and were further equipped for God's purpose for them. (1) There was a need and a time for pausing and looking inward, receiving, learning,

and consulting. (2) There was also the danger that they could become settled at Sinai and forget their mission. God's purpose for them would be thwarted.

C. There came a clear summon from God to advance: "Go take the land." (Deut. 1:6-8.) (1) Moses reminded them of their mission and urged them to move on in and take Palestine. (2) But this meant a strong faith in God, hard work, sacrifice, change, and above all, facing many kinds of danger. (3) There was also a great reward for those who would complete their purpose.

##### **II. God's Purpose for the Church.**

A. To carry the saving gospel to a lost world. (Eph. 1:23; Luke 19:10.)

B. And there may be a time and a need for individuals and local churches to pause and look inward, to study, to learn, to receive, to equip themselves for the noble task ahead.

C. But how easy it is to abide at this Mount too long. It is very easy to forget and lose sight of our purpose. Unconsciously, we retreat behind the safety of the walls



of our nice and comfortable buildings, settle down and enjoy the luxury of a retired communion while thousands live and die in sin not even knowing what we stand for.

D. We, as Israel of old, have a clear command to advance and take the world for Christ. But to do so, we must have a great faith in God as our leader, give up some of our cherished traditions, muster the courage to face the discomforts and dangers involved, and do the necessary work to get

the job done.

E. There is also a great reward for those who complete this mission.

Conclusion: If Israel had stayed at Mt. Sinai, God's purpose for them would have been defeated. The same is true of the church. If we remain in the safety of our buildings and refuse to penetrate the community with the gospel of Christ, God's purpose for the church will be thwarted and the world will be lost.

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## Pray Without Ceasing

**Dan Williams, Roanoke Rapids, NC**

One of the most precious privileges we enjoy as Christians is our prayer relationship with God. It is thrilling to know that He who made heaven and earth not only allows, but actually desires, for us to speak to Him. We must constantly guard against the temptation to take this priceless relationship for granted. Paul underscores the importance of prayers in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 when he commands Christians to "pray without ceasing." This is the shortest verse in the New Testament (in Greek), yet it contains a wealth of significance for us.

What does it mean to "pray constantly" (RSV)? Certainly it does not involve staying on our knees 24 hours a day! Rather, the true import of this little admonition is in maintaining an **attitude** of prayer. To "pray without ceasing" would involve at least three things.

### **Keep in Touch With God!**

If we are to maintain a prayerful attitude we will have to stay on speaking terms with God. That is, we must keep our life free from anything that would prevent us from speaking to our Father at any moment. If ever we should find ourselves in a place or activity in which we would be ashamed to speak to God, chances are we are in the wrong place!

Christian, do not let anything interfere with your relationship to God! An example of how sin can affect our prayer life is found in 1 Peter 3:7. There Simon Peter

warns husbands that if we do not try to understand and get along with our wives we "will find it impossible to pray properly" (Phillips), that "our prayers (will) be hindered" (KJV). The word translated "hindered" is an interesting one for the apostle to have chosen. It originally meant to "cut in, interrupt." Not as many people have a party line on their telephone as they used to, but most of us are familiar with them. When several families shared the same line, a private conversation might suddenly become public, as a third party picked up their receiver to see if the line was "clear." If you were lucky, they would hang up and your conversation could continue, but if not, and you were unwilling to include a third party, you might say in exasperation, "Well, I can't talk any more — someone's cut in on us."

That is exactly what Peter says happens when husbands and wives do not act as they should to one another — it **cuts in** on their conversations with God. This is just one example we could cite of sins that can hinder our prayers. The point is, however, if we are to "pray without ceasing" we will need to keep the lines open to God (cf. Ps. 66:16-20).

### **Keep a Regular Schedule of Prayer**

Get into the habit of prayer. We are all creatures of habit much of the time. First we make our habits, then our habits make us. A habit is any practice or action we unconsciously follow. You do not make a decision when practicing a habit — you

follow it without thinking.

Since our habits influence us greatly, we should deliberately develop good habits. For example, Luke 4:16 tells us that Jesus "Came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day." When that morning came, Jesus did not have to make a decision: "Well, let's see — am I going to worship God today or not?" He did not have to make a choice between the beach, the mountains, or worship. There was no question about it, because Jesus made worship a fixed part of His schedule.

Are you in the habit of prayer? Is it a fixed part of your daily schedule? To be in the habit of prayer is not to pray the same things over and over, without thinking about what we say — our prayers should never become routine (cf. Matt. 6:7). It is to have a definite, jealously guarded time set aside each day to talk with our Father. We need to think about **what** to pray, yes; but about **whether** to pray, no!

In the keeping of such a daily prayer schedule, we can learn from the example of Daniel (Dan. 6). He was in the habit of going down on his knees three times a day in prayer to God, and he refused to allow anything to disrupt that schedule. Even when Darius passed a decree against such prayer, even though his enemies were spying on him, and even if it meant being thrown into a den of lions, Daniel was still down on his knees three times a day!

When you have your prayer time during the day is up to you. We do not know when Daniel's three times were, but we do know David's prayer schedule: morning, noon, and night (Ps. 55:17). The important thing is that you **do** set aside some time each day to petition God. One thing is fairly certain — unless you do maintain a regular schedule of prayer, it will be very hard to "pray without ceasing."

### Keep It Up!

To "pray without ceasing" is clearly to "continue in prayer" (Col. 4:2), to keep on praying, to pray without quitting. For Christians, prayer is impossible to live without, yet all too easy to overlook. But the

quality of our prayer life is an accurate barometer of our spiritual condition — never let anything cause you to quit praying!

Doubts might intrude on our prayers, and cause them to cease. Do my prayers really make any difference? Does God hear? Why do I need to pray? I once heard a young man lead a prayer during worship that went something like this: "Our Father, you know what we need before we ask it, so what more can we say? In Jesus' name, Amen." Whether his prayer was truly sincere or merely facetious is open to question, but one thing is certain: he had missed the point of prayer!

Of course God knows our needs before we ask (Matt. 6:8), yet He still commands us to ask (Matt. 6:9-13, 7:7-11). Could it be that He wants us to recognize our needs, and through prayer to realize our dependence on Him? Or perhaps, like any good father, He just wants His children to talk to Him. We do know this: the Bible firmly teaches that if we do not ask, we will not receive (Matt. 7:7; James 4:3). The Lord desires and requires our prayers, so "pray without ceasing."

Discouragements might cripple our prayers, and cause them to cease. We know by faith that God hears us, yet still may become discouraged when we do not see the answers to our prayers as quickly as we might wish. But prayer is not a "one-shot" magic wand affair; we must continue to pray.

In Luke 18, Jesus told the parable of the persistent widow, who kept bothering a crooked judge until finally she received justice. The point of that parable is clearly stated in the first verse: "Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should **always pray and not give up**." Jesus recognized the danger of "prayer failure," and warned against it. So no matter what happens, "pray without ceasing!"

Your prayer relationship with God is the very lifeblood of the Christian life; keep it healthy and active. Keep in touch with God, keep a schedule of daily prayer, and keep on praying, no matter what! When you do, you will fulfill Paul's command to "pray without ceasing."

# Twenty Years

## Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

To work with the same church for 20 years is no small accomplishment. The article below describes the work of B.G. Langston with the Cape Fear church in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

I remember when Bob and Margaret moved to Fayetteville to begin the Cape Fear church. My dad was preaching for the newly-established church in Wilson, N.C. I remember my family driving down (it was only 80 miles) on Sunday afternoon to attend a Singing and Open House as the brethren entered their new meetinghouse.

I have received the Cape Fear bulletin for years and followed the progress of the Lord's work with interest.

I commend brother and sister Langston and the Cape Fear church on their 20th anniversary. They have established a precedent that ought to be emulated by preachers and churches alike.

The article which follows appeared in the Cape Fear bulletin for April 4, 1982.

"On the occasion of the beginning of our twenty-first year as a congregation, a brief history seems appropriate. The Lincoln and Fanning Heights churches in Huntsville, Alabama, were searching in the fall of 1961 for a place to establish a new congregation in North Carolina. After research, several survey trips, and prayer for guidance, Fayetteville was selected. Plans were made for the Langstons to move from Illinois in April of 1962. The brethren here who planned to be a part of the new work obtained the house on Cypress Road where the Langstons lived for ten years and received permission from Jernigan-Warren Funeral Home for worship services to be held there. A house across the street was used for classes. This arrangement was followed for almost three years. During this time the Village Drive property was obtained and bonds were sold to finance the building which was completed in February 1965. All the details connected with that period would require a book to record!

"Gospel meetings were held in a tent on the property until the building was com-

pleted. Since then there have been at least two gospel meetings or workshops each year. Tommy Rosenbloom, Paul Vining, Joe Galloway, Flavil Nichols, Garland Elkins, Howard Parker, James Creech, V.P. Black, Lowell Altizer, Virgil Hale, Malcolm Lammons, E. Claude Gardner, H.A. Fincher, Milton Irvin, John Crowder, Raymond Climer, Robert Brown, John Waddey, and Franklin Camp have preached in meetings.

"There have been workshops on personal evangelism (August Ruff), marriage and the family (Ron Brotherton), singing (W.D. Jeffcoat), and education and congregation development (Ted and Orman Underwood). In 1968, a sixteen-day campaign was held with brethren from other areas assisting in door-knocking and personal teaching and V.P. Black doing the nightly preaching for nine days. We hosted the Carolina Lectures in 1976. Bert Thompson conducted his Creation-Evolution Seminar in 1981.

"During the twenty years, two hundred and forty-three have been baptized, five hundred and ten were restored, and four hundred and twenty-six placed membership. Now you may ask, 'Where are all these people?' In a time when transiency is prevalent in society, we've been in a place where the population is extremely transient. Most years, military transfers, retirements, plant closings and job transfers have caused us to lose more by members moving away than we gained in baptisms and new people moving in. Many have met with us during the years who did not identify with the congregation. To the best of our knowledge these people who are still here with the original 1962 group: the Bells, Kathie Byrd, the Carvers, the Hookers, the Mandels, the Owens, the Herley Paschals, Joyce Dail, Tennie Wear. Some who came shortly after were La Verne Blue, Judy Harmon, the Ed Kennedys, Alice Morrison, Frances Polk, the Turners.

"We have had the opportunity to fellowship with some of the finest Christians on earth. Cape Fear converts are



literally all over the world and it is a thrill to hear of former members scattered abroad, sowing the word, and serving as elders, deacons and preachers.

"The church has been self-supporting since January 1, 1968. The indebtedness on the building and grounds was paid off in December, 1975, and Paul Vining came to be with us for a mortgage-burning ceremony. Elders were first installed in 1973. J.D. Mandel, Oscar Craft, and B.G. Langston have served as elders. Oscar Craft is now an elder at Duncan, South Carolina.

"There has been a Vacation Bible School each year. A benevolent program has been sustained through the years with large amounts of clothing and food distributed as well as monetary assistance. Wesley Crews was assisted in attending Memphis School of Preaching. We have helped in mission work in Kenya, Arizona and Cherokee, N.C. (work among Indians), Keyser, West Virginia, Henderson, North Carolina, and we had a part in establishing the Clinton, North Carolina, church.

"None of these facts have any meaning except as a part of our intentions to glorify God and save souls. The Langston's came with the idea of devoting five years to an area where the church has not grown rapidly and those years have stretched to twenty. We would be less than honest if we did not admit that some of those years have been painfully difficult. Many others have been peaceful, invigorating and full of encouragement. We do not regret any of our experiences, knowing with Paul, 'Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distress for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.' (2 Cor. 12:10.)

"And now, as we begin year twenty-one, let us declare again with Paul, 'Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' " (Phil. 3:13-14.)



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

### **Lipscomb Hosts Summer Lectures**

**Nashville, Tenn.:** David Lipscomb College will host its 35th annual summer Lectures June 13-16. The theme of this year's lectureship will be "The Restoration of the Christian Home." Keynote speakers for the week include Ken Schott, Paul Prill, Jim Thomas, Paul Faulkner, Jim McDaniel, and William Woodson. Carl McKelvey, director of the Lectures, stated that "It has been said, 'The home is the basic unit of our society, the most important institution in modern life. The home is the first to influence the child. It guides him at the most impressionable age. It nurtures him for the longest period of time, it provides the most intimate associations and thus, without a doubt, makes the most lasting impression.' It is because of these factors David Lipscomb College has chosen 'The Restoration of the

Christian Home' as the theme for its 1982 Summer Lectures." Those desiring more information may contact brother McKelvey by calling 1-800-251-2054.

### **Theme for Church's World's Fair Exhibit Announced**

**Knoxville, Tenn.:** The Laurel church of Christ in Knoxville, has announced that the theme of the exhibit to be presented by the churches of Christ at the 1982 World's Fair will be "Energy for Life." The exhibit is divided into four interest areas illustrating the themes of "God's Love," "The Bible," "Family/Relationships," and "The Church." Al Behel, minister of the Laurel church, said, "Each area of the exhibit is designed to reach and touch a person's life, telling them that there are answers to life's questions. One of the main messages is that

God cares." The exhibit is being developed under the oversight of the Laurel church and is being supported by churches of Christ all over the world.

### **New Referral Service for Preachers and Churches**

**Nashville, Tenn.:** A new referral service for preachers and churches of Christ throughout the United States and Canada is scheduled to begin in May. The service is designed for preachers who desire to learn of possible places of employment and churches who are looking for preachers. There will be two lists published each month, one for preachers and one for churches. The subscription rate for the service is \$35.00 for three consecutive months. Preachers and churches wishing to be placed on the list should send the necessary information. Those desiring to receive either list should indicate which lists they want and include the subscription price. Information and subscription requests should be mailed to: Minister and Church Referral

Service, P.O. Box 140779, Nashville, Tenn. 37214.

### **ACU-Dallas Becomes Amber University**

**Dallas, Texas:** Abilene University at Dallas will end its eleven-year affiliation with Abilene Christian University of Abilene on June 1, 1982, and will become a separate university, according to a recent announcement by Douglas W. Warner, ACU-Dallas president. The new name of the school will be Amber University. According to Warner, the reason for the action was that "In 1977 we realized the Dallas campus was growing to the point to where it would have to stand on its own or curtail its academic programs and remain part of the Abilene campus. It was then that we decided to develop an autonomous university." Present enrollment at the university is approximately 1050 students who commute and attend night classes. Amber University is committed to Christian education and Christian values.

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## ***Carolina Church News***

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

#### **David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

**Raleigh.** Brooks Avenue church has announced that "The Herald of Truth" television program will be appearing each Sunday at 12:00 noon over WPTF-TV.

**Charlotte.** Archdale has announced the "International Gospel Hour" on Sunday mornings at 6:00 over WBT radio.

**Jacksonville.** The Roosevelt Drive church will be assisting in the support of Paul Ditoro's work in Washington, N.C.

**Andrews.** Paul Balch is working with the church. One has recently been baptized.

**Fayetteville.** A special contribution to assist in work in South Africa was given in March by the Helen Street church. Terry

Graves is the preacher at Helen Street.

**Charlotte.** Westside has added Andy Hood to the eldership and David Myers to the list of deacons. This provides them with three elders and five deacons. On April 18 a new record attendance was set with 203 present.

**Wilkesboro.** On March 7 three deacons were appointed.

#### **N.C. Baptisms**

Raleigh, 6; Burlington, 1; Broad St., Statesville, 2; Highland Acres, Statesville, 2; Hickory, 1; Andrews, 1; West Hickory, 2; Helen St., Fayetteville, 2; Westside, Charlotte, 5; Providence Rd., Charlotte, 4; Wilkesboro, 3. Total: 29.

#### **Raleigh, Brooks Avenue**

**BENNY WEAST, Reporting:** Wanted: Evangelistically-minded youth minister to work with approximately 50 junior high and senior high school people. Additional experience in areas such as education and personal work would be most helpful. Send

resume to Jack Harris, c/o Brooks Avenue church of Christ, 700 Brooks Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27607.

### Raleigh, Brooks Avenue

MITCH MITCHELL, Reporting: 1981 was a great year for those who were a part of the Triangle Outreach from the Brooks Avenue congregation at Raleigh, North Carolina. Mitch Mitchell, Brooks Avenue Associate Minister, has been the evangelist for this outreach program under the oversight of the Brooks Avenue elders.

In January 1981, 32 people, mostly college students from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Duke University, were involved in this effort. There were four weekly group Bible studies held in the area and a mid-week service was held on Thursday night in Chapel Hill with an average attendance of 42, with 6 to 9 visitors at each service. There were 20 baptisms in 1981 from this area of work and there were 45 Christians in this area involved in the Triangle Outreach at the end of 1981. Several students graduated and moved to other places where they are actively involved in local congregations.

In January 1982, the group started having Sunday afternoon services at 4 p.m. at Durham Jordan High School. Four families from Brooks Avenue are supporting this effort by attending these services. In addition, one of the seven elders from Brooks Avenue attends the services each Sunday afternoon on a rotational basis. Other members frequently visit the services. An average attendance of approximately 70 has resulted so far in 1982.

In addition, the group meets now for mid-week services on Wednesday evening at

111 Beard on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. The Wednesday study is on the fundamentals of faith using as an outline, Brother Batsell Barrett Baxter's book, **Family of God**. Also, the number of group Bible studies in the area has grown to seven.

In addition to Mitch Mitchell and his wife, Jan, working in the area, we are fortunate to have Mike and Anne-Brigette Taliaferro working in this outreach effort on a full-time basis. Mike recently finished his B.A. degree from Abilene Christian University and is being supported by the Falls church, Virginia church and the 11th and Willis church in Abilene, Texas.

The Brooks Avenue elders are excited about this outreach and solicit your prayers as we strive to reach souls in this area.

The Brooks Avenue church of Christ sponsored a Campus Spring Retreat on April 2-3 at the YMCA camp in Greensboro, N.C. The theme of this gospel meeting designed for college students was "His Servants, the Prophets." There were over 200 in attendance from 13 universities in North and South Carolina. The following congregations participate: Providence Road church of Christ (Charlotte), Greenville church of Christ (Greenville, NC), Friendly Avenue church of Christ (Greensboro), Charlotte Avenue church of Christ (Rock Hill), Boone church of Christ (Boone), and Brooks Avenue church of Christ (Raleigh). There have been 9 baptisms since the retreat of visitors who participated.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**Palmetto Bible Camp.** Dates for camp will be from June 13 to July 24. The camp is

### GOSPEL MEETINGS, ETC.

#### South Carolina

Newberry, Winfred Clark .....	May 17-20
Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, H.A. Fincher, Jr. ....	May 23-28
Northeast, Greenville, Open House .....	May 30
Gaffney, Johnny Melton .....	May 30-June 2

#### North Carolina

Gastonia, W.E. Skipper .....	May 17-23
Archdale, Charlotte, Youth Rally .....	June 25-27



located north of Greenville, S.C. The Second Annual Homecoming Weekend is scheduled for July 3-4. For camp applications and additional information, contact Tim Thigpen, P.O. Box 8121, Asheville, NC 28814; or call 704-254-4035.

**Greenville.** Northeast has scheduled "Open House" for May 30 with a goal of 410. This will be at their new building at 3506 Edwards Road.

**Greenville.** Glenn Moreland, gospel preacher, well-known for years of service in South Carolina, recently suffered a stroke.

### S.C. Baptisms

Clinton, 3; Greer, 3; Washington Ave., Greenville, 1; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 1; Duncan, 3; Essex Village, Charleston, 2; Newberry, 2; N. Charleston, 4; West Columbia, 2; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 5. Total: 29.

### Greer

**JERRY SENN**, Reporting: During the first three months of 1982, we are happy to report three baptisms and two restorations. During our recent Gospel Meeting, in which Herb Alsop, of Woodbury, Tenn., did the preaching, we had a high attendance of 118. We have launched a "Wonderful Wednesday

### PROCLAMATIONS . . . from page 10

ing the time of Jesus' coming. He merely wishes to observe the fact. The Lord's Supper proclaims to the church and to the world that Christ is coming again.

### Conclusion

Men will continue to build their great and elaborate monuments in the memory of other men and events, but none will ever rival the simple beauty and profundity of that ever-abiding memorial which consists of a loaf and a cup. The Lord's Supper is the embodiment of the cardinal truths of our faith. In it is proclaimed the death of Christ which provides for the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of Christ through which is accomplished victory over sin and death, and the second coming of Christ, which we eagerly await.

day Night" program which has increased our mid-week attendance considerably. In coming months we plan a Senior Citizen's Day and will begin a Super Saturday program in which we will be going into our community with a children's program designed to promote our bus work.

### Washington Avenue, Greenville

**BILL SMITH**, Reporting: Bob Rigdon, minister at Sylva, N.C., for 25 years and professor at Western Carolina University was with us the first of April. The theme was love, with these topics — "Love in Action," "Non-Verbal Love," "Love and Hate," "Conscience." Bob conducted 19 meetings last year on such themes as "Christian Family," "Parenting," "Love," and "Mental Health." He has been in our area six times and I have heard some of all of these and we recommend him highly. Contact him at P.O. Box 101, Sylva, NC 28779.

### Needed

The Williston, South Carolina, congregation is seeking a preacher. Write P.O. Box 255, Williston, S.C. 29853, or call Terrill Tuten — (803) 266-3851 (nights only).

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**July 25-31, 1982**  
**August 1-7, 1982**

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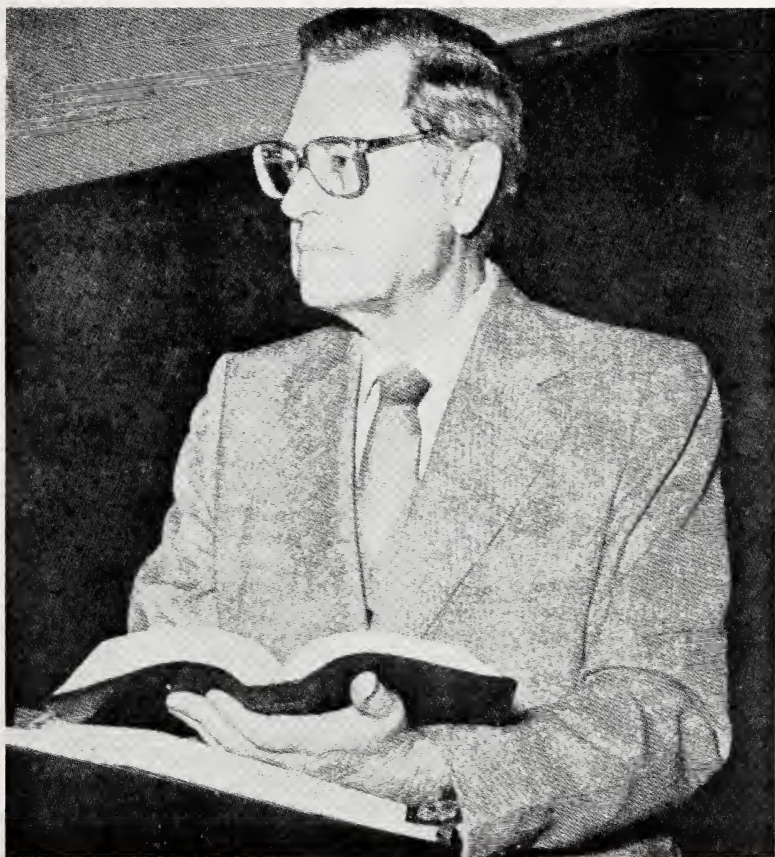


# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 6, JUNE 1982



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C292



**Batsell Barrett Baxter**  
**1916-1982**  
**(See page 4)**

# editorial

## THOSE WHO DIFFER

The crucial thing in our current problems in the church in the Carolinas is not the fact that we differ in some matters, but that we often show an ugly and unchristian attitude and disposition in our differences. Differences are really not what bothers us. We do not suppose there are any two people on earth who agree on everything. We have never seen anyone with whom we agree one hundred percent and we have never encountered anyone who agrees with us in every detail. Our plea to restore the ancient order of things does not require precise agreement in all matters of opinion, expediency, or judgment. It only requires that we agree in matters specifically taught in the word of God.

For example, before moving to the Carolinas we preached in a certain city. We had built a new building and had gone to considerable labor and expense to install a baptistry. One Sunday night two young ladies came forward and requested baptism for the remission of sins, but they informed us that they did not want to be baptized in the baptistry. They said they believed baptism should be in running water because that is the way Jesus did it. We differed with them but happily took them to a nearby river and filled their request, even though it was most inconvenient. The problem here, as with most of our differences, was in the fact that they had confused the command to be baptized in water (regardless of where that water might be) with a matter of expediency pertaining to the water, and they had bound that expediency on their conscience as if it were the word of God. But their binding of an expediency on themselves did not prevent them from obeying the Lord's command. Thus we could baptize them Scripturally while differing with them as to the status of the water in which they were to be baptized. We agreed on what Jesus specifically taught (baptism in water) but differed over a matter of expediency (where that water was to be).

So it is not the differences among us in

these areas that disturb us: it is our attitude and disposition toward those with whom we differ. We have had occasions (especially as pertaining to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Christian's right to serve as an agent for his government, even in time of war, and the status of a remarried divorcee) to differ with many great, good, and sincere brethren. Some (and here we could name some of the greatest people God has on this earth) have differed with us in a friendly, brotherly, Christian manner. And we have worked together in as much harmony as we worked with the two young ladies whom we baptized in running water rather than in a warm convenient baptistry. Love, appreciation, and fellowship were not diminished in the least. In fact, we admired each other for standing true to his convictions. We believe this is the way it should be. But unfortunately this has not always been the case.

Some who have differed with others have been downright ugly about the matter — a thing that is far more foreign to Christianity than false beliefs in matters non-essential. This "uglyism" has been expressed by the withdrawal of fellowship, by brotherhood-wide campaigns to brand and mark some as false teachers, by spreading misinformation, by regarding some sincere Christians

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### EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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as no longer faithful to Christ or sound in the truth, by urging churches or colleges not to use certain ones in meetings or on lectureships, by refusing to attend lectureships where some speak, by turning their backs rather than be seen speaking to some in public, etc. We know one group who were terribly embarrassed because a well-known preacher attended their services. They took the words of Jesus and literally applied them to him while he was among them: "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man" (Matt. 18:17) . . . or worse! The fact that this has happened to certain ones is not the point; the fact that it displays an ugly and unchristian attitude and disposition is.

All this has led us to the conclusion that we simply do not know how to be honest, kind, considerate, and brotherly toward those who differ with us on anything, regardless of whether it is in matters of faith or opinion. It is this unchristian and devilish attitude that needs to be corrected among us, and if it is not it will mean the death of the church as we know it in the Carolinas. There is simply no place for "uglyism" in the Lord's church.

It is our staunch and unmovable judgment that we ought to show a Christian attitude and disposition toward **all**, even to those who may be lost for embracing false teaching. Because someone else is wrong does not give us a right to be wrong in spirit. If we cannot have a Christian attitude toward those who differ with us, then we simply cannot be Christians.

## NO IMPRIMATUR, PLEASE

There are many ways by which the free flow of thought is controlled. In Catholicism, it is by Imprimatur. Before a Catholic can publish a book on a religious subject it must bear the Imprimatur of a Bishop. The Imprimatur is in essence official approval, or at least it certifies that nothing in the book is contrary to Catholic doctrine. And any religious book that does not carry the Imprimatur is forbidden to the laity. By this means the hierarchy of Catholicism controls the thoughts of its adherents. Catholicism thus keeps itself a closed system — no idea but a Catholic idea

can officially enter the minds of a Catholic. We think this is a deplorable situation. Why should one man, or a group of men, be permitted to control the flow of ideas?

But if we are not careful we may develop a system of control similar to, if not identical with, Imprimatur. We become so sold on what we conceive to be the truth that we effectively close out all ideas that do not conform exactly with our own. For example, a year or so ago we received a copy of a communication from one good brother to another with whom he seriously differed on a particular subject. The writer urged that the brother to whom he was writing (a man whose sincerity, scholarship, and ability has never been questioned) not to publish a book (on the subject of their difference) until he had a chance to talk with him. But yet the brother who was writing argued his views in a very powerful way. And he did so without waiting to talk with the second brother. As we view it, this was essentially saying, "I have the right to publish my views without your consent but you should not publish yours without mine." But the fact is, God never authorized any man or group of men to publish their views without the consent of others and at the same time demand that others get their permission before publishing a different set of ideas. And when one (or a group) tries, his zeal has outrun his reason. (Incidentally, we differ radically with both the men mentioned here on the particular subject in question, but we do not believe that either is compelled to get our permission to publish his views in any way that may be at his disposal, and we have no intentions of seeking the approval of either to publish our own when we have the means to do so.)

If this does not border on the practice of Imprimatur (the necessity of receiving official approval) and censorship (making a list of forbidden books . . . and forbidden ideas), what does? Yet there is more: Some preachers have been known to feel that it is their obligation to read **Carolina Christian** (or any other publication) and pass on its soundness (place their Imprimatur upon it) before members of the church are permitted to see or read it. What is this but thought control? What is it but a limited system of



Imprimatur? (Of course this is not to say that the church should buy, distribute, or use just anything. Certainly not. But there is a vast difference in the church teaching something and in trying to exercise control over the mind.) Shades of Crossroadsism!

## **BROTHER BAXTER**

It will not be news to anyone now, but Batsell Barrett Baxter, of Nashville, Tennessee, lost an eighteen-year battle with cancer on March 31 and triumphantly in the faith he had long preached, quietly passed from this life into the next one. Thus ended the life of one of the most marvelous, loved, and respected men in the twentieth century. He was unique — a powerful preacher, a polished scholar, an eloquent speaker, an effective teacher, an elegant personality, an extraordinary example, a lover of souls, a friend to the helpless, and a defender of the faith. He was a gentle, kind, good man who by his goodness left a large footprint on the sand of time and thereby influenced thousands to devote themselves to making this a better world in which to live and to brighten hopes for eternity.

Brother Baxter was a Christian in the true sense of the term. He loved the Lord, the Lord's church, and the Lord's people (he loved all people but he loved the Lord's people in a special way). He rejoiced with them and wept with them. He was deeply concerned about all the problems and dif-

ficulties they might face — he knew their needs and devoted himself to their service. He was big enough to be humble in their presence; kind enough to acknowledge their worth; concerned enough to take time to hear them; tolerant enough to acknowledge them as brethren; and Christian enough to be concerned about their welfare and to love them in spite of their weaknesses. His radio and television preaching (by the Herald of Truth and other programs, he preached the pure gospel to more people than any other man who ever lived) enabled him to reach thousands who would have otherwise been lost.

Brother Baxter was the one man among us who everyone respected. He may have been too conservative for the taste of some and too liberal for others — he was conservative in his theology but liberal in his love, concern, benevolence, and attitude. Little men and nit-pickers found in him a target — his greatness kindled their envy. This broke his heart. But it was impossible for his enemies to pull him down to their level; he never ceased, however, to try to lift them to his. Many often differed with him on matters of judgment (and some on a few insignificant matters of doctrine), but no one ever questioned his sincerity or morality. And (in our judgment) had our brotherhood been called upon to select the one among us who would most epitomize the Christian, embody the principles of Christ, and best represent Christianity as it is supposed to be manifested in each person who embrace it, there is no doubt but that Batsell Barrett Baxter would have been universally chosen. He was known widely and loved deeply.

He was affectionately known by everyone as "Brother Baxter," an endearing term that seems to fit him better than anyone else we have ever known. He was a man who lived in faith, served his generation well, died in the Lord, and left behind him a heritage such as only a very few men in the whole history of the world have known. Brother Baxter! This is the way we knew him in life; it is the way we knew him in death; it is the way we will remember him; and it is the way we will know him in eternity. Lord, give us more like him!

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# Our Greatest Problem

**C.W. Bradley, Memphis, TN**

A few days ago, a man who has served as an elder in the Lord's church for many years asked me what I consider to be the most serious problems facing the brotherhood today. How would you answer this question?

I think he anticipated my answer. In fact, before I could decide on my response, he said, "Would you say it is the marriage question or the Crossroads issue?"

But neither of these was my answer. I said, "I believe the most serious problem facing the brotherhood today is an attitude — an attitude of suspicion and distrust, an attitude of arrogance and spiritual superiority, an attitude which seems to say, 'I'm right and everyone who does not agree with me in every detail is wrong and is neither my friend nor brother,' an attitude which is ready to mark off from our fellowship list all who do not share our exact views." Have you ever been in a crowd of people who claim to be New Testament Christians and yet you sensed an atmosphere of coldness and aloofness and detected an attitude which seemed to place you on the outside of their circle? **This is the attitude which I consider to be the most serious problem in the brotherhood today.**

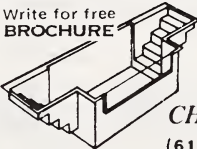
If you have concluded that I do not consider the marriage question or the Crossroads Philosophy as being serious and

in need of diligent study, you are mistaken. I consider them to be very serious and I have firm convictions regarding these and many other issues that face the brotherhood. **To be sure, we face many grave problems today.**

The Lord's church has faced grave problems in every age since its beginning, and it will continue to face them. Several of the issues which I hear discussed today in open forums are the same questions which I heard discussed more than forty years ago when I began preaching. Furthermore, if time goes on, brethren will still be discussing them a hundred or a thousand years from now.

With the proper attitude toward truth and error, and with the proper love and respect toward our fellow-Christians, we will find the answer to all of our pressing problems, but if we let bitterness, arrogance and resentment dominate us to the extent that we cannot discuss our differences while still looking upon each other as brethren, we will cease to move onward and will stagnate and die spiritually.

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# Dangerous Reactions

## Jack Rogers, Spartanburg, SC

Without a doubt, there are some among us who teach a distorted view of total commitment to Christ. Many good articles have appeared in our papers and bulletins to correct this error. There have been some good lectures dealing with the problem. It has been said that one extreme often begets another, and such is the case now. The problem of misdirected commitment has generated several dangerous reactions that are often overlooked. While commitment to a human standard is deadly, some of the reactions to it will condemn people just as quickly.

One reaction among the brethren is to do little or nothing for the cause of Christ. While one extreme advances its doctrine of misdirected commitment, another segment demonstrates an aversion to any commitment — indifference! Some Christians have long been patting themselves on the back for being against all “-isms,” yet they practice and encourage “lazy-ism.” Our Lord had a word for the lazy and indifferent: “So then because thou are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.” (Rev. 3:16.) Those who are guilty of this justify themselves when they read and hear the pronouncements against “cultism” in the church, because they are not involved in such. They are proud of themselves because they do not practice error. However, it is just as deadly to be a lazy, indifferent Christian as it is to be “totally committed” to a human system.

Another reaction is demonstrated by those who say, “If there really is a problem, and if it ever shows up in our congregation, we will deal with it then.” This is a dangerous reaction to any error. It is much wiser, as has been said, to “prepare and prevent, rather than repair and repent.” Often before an error is detected in a congregation, irreparable damage has been done. It is essential that the body be warned of approaching dangers, instead of allowing them to creep in and do harm before taking action. The Scriptures place great emphasis upon watchfulness. Paul warned the elders

from Ephesus of false teachers. He then exhorted the elders in these words: “Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:31.) We need to take Paul’s advice to watch, and follow his example of warning.

It is true that, as brethren, we should be very cautious about believing reports of false teaching or practice. We should be willing to give the benefit of the doubt. Any group of Christians can be falsely accused. However, when evidence of false teaching or practice is compelling and conclusive, we would be irresponsible to ignore it.

A third reaction can be found among the brethren. It is the tendency to avoid or de-emphasize certain themes in preaching, teaching and discussion. While one extreme places great emphasis upon “Total Commitment,” “Lordship of Christ,” “Discipleship,” and “One-another Religion,” another segment avoids these topics for fear of being “labeled” or “branded.” Is it right to ignore these themes simply because they are taught zealously by some who practice error? Definitely not! When truth is not taught on a matter, the door is left wide open for error to creep in. Yes, sound brethren who teach these things may be labeled or branded. But so was Paul, and again, his example at Ephesus is worthy of imitation. He reminded the elders that he had “kept back nothing that was profitable,” and that he had “not shunned to declare . . . all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:20, 27.) When one cannot teach a Scriptural topic for fear of brotherhood reaction, he shows more concern for the praise of men than for the favor of God. Christians must not allow brotherhood esteem to shape the content of their message.

There is yet another dangerous reaction to error. While this reaction may begin with a noble motive, it is far from noble. Before identifying it, however, one principle must be made unmistakably plain: Christians must **never** compromise the truth. We are always to stand solidly against error. Jude wrote that we are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the



saints.” (Jude 3.) No Christian has the right to back down from this God-given fighting order. But some of the practices that go on in the name of “defending the truth” are downright shameful! Someone has labeled this behavior “ugly-ism.” It is the most vicious, destructive reaction to error possible.

Some brethren are on a constant “witch hunt” in their efforts to keep the church pure. They are suspicious of every preacher they do not know well, and each one is guilty until he proves otherwise. And even when he proves he is against the particular error which he is assumed to practice, these self-appointed watchdogs will not be convinced. Hasty generalizations and blanket condemnations are the norm for these people. They will go to great lengths to dig up evidence (or rumors) to show that their target is involved in error. If they fail to find any, they sometimes just make noisy accusations and leave the unfortunate victim with the burden of proof and a shattered reputation. The fact that these vigilantes often lynch the guilty man does not excuse them for all the times they hang the innocent one. Whenever an **unsubstantiated** accusation comes to us, we are guilty of gossip if we even pass it on — even if it later proves to be true. If it proves false, it is slander. Both are strongly condemned and are devastating to the cause of truth. In fact, Paul put slanderers in the same category as fornicators, idolaters, and drunk-

ards (1 Cor. 5:11).

Even in cases where there is no doubt that people are practicing and teaching error, that does not make it “open season” on offenders! When Christians become entangled in error, it is the duty of the faithful to restore them in meekness (Gal. 6:1). Even when stern denunciations must be made — even when a teacher must be marked and avoided — there is no justification for being ugly and hateful about it. Have we forgotten that Jesus said that all men would know us by our love one for another? Love does correct and rebuke, but love does not allow personal attacks and misrepresentations. The extreme of “ugly-ism” should be abandoned for “speaking the truth in love.” (Eph. 4:15.)

These are four reactions to error which are themselves as dangerous as any error can be. May God help us to deal with error properly, and to avoid these dangerous reactions.

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# Jesus Is Lord

Max Safley, Spartanburg, SC

The story is told of Christians meeting in the days of the Roman Empire, in or near the city of Rome where it was illegal for Christians to meet, in catacombs which were underground cemeteries. It has been estimated that between one and two million Christians were martyred during the early persecutions. To have met with Christians was as much as signing one's death warrant if ever caught or even suspected. And we might reason, "certainly threat of a violent death would be enough reason to forsake Christ and the church and completely give up."

Yet, in order to meet together without being noticed, Christians would enter the catacombs under cover of darkness, early in the morning or late at night. They would then make their way to the lower level of tunnels. Here the stench of death would be greater, but for that reason their lives would be safer.

Picture yourself as part of this group of Christians who have met together among the catacombs, with decaying bodies all around and the smell so great that it makes tears come to your eyes and makes you vomit, and you are there worshipping — quoting long passages of Scripture from memory; taking the Lord's Supper; praying together. With worship ended, each would make his way back into the darkness lest he attract attention to himself and ultimately to the rest of the group.

Some would say that those people were crazy — fanatical, but these Christians did not think so. What was it that made them do this? "Boy, if I had to meet like that, you can forget it! Why, it's ridiculous and stupid to do something like that, especially when death would be the result if caught!" What was it that compelled these early Christians to do this?

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*"To put more heart into one's religion, one must have more religion in his heart."*

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These people had a fanatical dedication to service — they had a faith that would not be shaken and could not shrink — they displayed a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. They were willing to consign themselves — completely transferring their lives to the possession and control of Jesus Christ. They really understood what it was to be called a disciple of Christ, because it meant denial of self, and taking up your cross and following after Jesus (Matt. 16:24). It meant forsaking all that you have (Luke 14:33). It meant holding Jesus Christ far above love for father or mother or wife or children or brethren or sisters, and yea, for your own life also (Luke 14:26). It meant total surrender, and no doubt they could sing that song, "All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give," because that was the very core of their lives. They knew who controlled them and they knew that it was totally worth it. They could say along with the Apostle Paul, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). And they could remember the stirring words of Peter, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." (1 Pet. 4:19.) The Christian who suffers persecution for faithfulness suffers according to the will of God. And so, in view of this, he is to **commit** his soul into the hands of God who, as a faithful Creator, will keep His promise.

As I look over the brotherhood today, I see brothers and sisters who possess a similar degree of faith and commitment as those early Christians did. But think about it! How strong is **your** faith? How much are you really willing to give your life, your soul, your all, over to the Lord Jesus Christ? How much do you really love God? How serious are you about Christ and doing **all** He says to do?

I thank God for the faithful, dedicated, committed Christians who show their love by their example. Why, they would give their very lives for Jesus, because **He is** their Lord!

# Isn't God Wonderful?

John D. White, Union, SC

*"These words that I speak unto you, they are the spirit, and they are life!"* (John 6:63.)

The Psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Ps. 133:1.)

Jesus, our Lord, taught the following, "And the Lord said unto the servants, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." (Luke 14:23.) Further, in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He spelled out His Great Commandment in Matthew 28:18-20, "... All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Finally, He instructs us in relation to carrying out His commands. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the **Lord of the harvest** that **He will send forth laborers** into His harvest." (Matt. 9:37.)

On April 18-23, 1982, the Union church witnessed the power and the beauty of these words as they were put into prayerful action.

Under the leadership of three very fine men: Walt Akers, David Foster, and Gary Ham (elders), it was agreed that a gospel meeting would be conducted by me as I am relatively new to the Carolinas. Brother David Pharr of Rock Hill graciously declined doing this meeting (he had been scheduled to do so) in order to allow myself to become better acquainted with the area.

It was at this point that the brethren of the Union church rolled up their sleeves and went to work. No one was negative in any way. Everyone went into the meeting expecting great results. Due to their much work, their diligent prayers, their love for lost souls and our Lord of harvest, the

following was achieved.

1. An average attendance each evening of almost 140.
2. Fantastic loyalty of the members each evening.
3. Loving excitement running rampant within the congregation.
4. Visitors (mostly from the city) galore. Brethren really worked!
5. Brethren from our local area supported the meeting encouragingly.
6. Four precious souls baptized into their Master.
7. Six precious souls reclaimed from the role of the disfellowshipped.
8. Approximately seven asking for prayers and expressing a powerful recommitment to their Lord.
9. One placing membership.
10. God giving much increase as only time will divulge.
11. Very excellent singing each evening (led by Gary Ham).

One of the beautiful aspects of the meeting saw our elders, at the front each evening, talking with those who were responding.

Our present statistics are approximately 160 in attendance and about \$1000.00 in contribution. Pray for us as we pray for you and the Lord's work, everywhere.

It was truly a memorable event. We give all the praise and glory and honor to our Lord Jesus Christ who makes it possible for Christians to be happy and productive. Isn't God truly wonderful?

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# Sinking Sand

Michael R. Mobley, Mooresville, NC

Have you ever stood on the ocean beach? Have you then ever stood where the tide comes in? As you stand there, the water carries sand in over your feet. But sand beneath you is too weak to withstand the water's pressure, and you sink. The water continues to come in; you continue to sink. Eventually, you have sunk all you are going to. Yet, the water continues to bury your feet with the sand. But all you need to do is pick up your feet and move!

Are you living without Jesus? Are you one who has not obeyed the gospel of Christ in faith? Or having done so, are you one who lives without trust in that gospel? Then you are living on sinking sand! Without Jesus in your life, there is nothing to hold you up. Without confidence in Him, you will not be standing on a solid and sure foundation. As your problems constantly arise, they will keep knocking you down

and pressing you down. It will seem as though you cannot get up. The burden of your sins is so great that there is not a hope of being saved from this miserable and unwanted condition. It just keeps burying you and pushing you down. But all you need to do is turn to Jesus and away from sin or seeking things out your own ways. He **will** lift you up, take your burdens and you will live. Then you will have moved from the sinking sand to the solid rock! "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2:6-7.) "Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto **him** be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout **all** ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:20-21, c.f., verses 14-19.)

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*"Some build their hopes on the ever drifting sand,*

*Some on their fame or their treasures or their land.*

*Mine's on the rock that forever shall stand,*

*Jesus, the rock of ages."*

— S.S. Journal



## Church Autonomy

**Jim Coviello, Winston-Salem, NC**

The New Testament clearly teaches that local congregations are autonomous. "Autonomy" simply means the right or power of self-government; the capability of existing independently. But in what sense are congregations autonomous and what are the consequences of congregational autonomy? It is the purpose of this article to examine the Scriptural concept of autonomy, contrast it with some modern religious practices, and point out some misapplications of the autonomy doctrine.

### **The Application of Autonomy in Doctrinal Matters**

The local congregation is **not** autonomous in its relationship to Jesus Christ and His inspired messengers (the New Testament writers). Christ is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). His word is law. The congregation has no power or right to govern itself, in matters of faith, independently of Christ. Through His word, He exerts an "outside" control which dictates the faith and practice of every faithful congregation. Congregations which operate independently of His will suffer His displeasure and judgment (Rev. 2 and 3).

The apostles were the ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-20). Through them and the New Testament prophets, the Lord's will was made known to the church. Congregations are subject to the apostles' doctrine. This is why we see Paul giving orders to various churches to direct their activities (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). In fact, all the epistles indicate that congregations and individual Christians were bound by the inspired word of the apostles. Thus, church

autonomy cannot be found in the relationship the local congregation sustains with Christ and His ambassadors, the apostles. Churches are under the directives of Christ which are revealed in the apostolic word — the New Testament.

In matters of faith, congregations are free from human domination and control while being bound by the domination and control of the Lord. Therefore, no person or organization has the right to dictate doctrine to congregations. All such efforts are presumptuous proceedings which, by their very nature, attempt to dethrone Christ, remove His inspired writers, and tamper with the word of God. All religious groups which maintain regional bishops, assemblies, conventions, presidents, and so-called "apostles" to govern them in matters of faith do so without any Scriptural authority.

We must take care that we do not allow anyone to dictate matters of faith to the congregation. When congregations "line-up" with the doctrinal positions of editors, schools, preachers, or other congregations, they exhibit the spirit of denominationalism by allowing human beings to become their source of authority.

### **The Application of Autonomy in Matters of Expediency and Method**

Matters pertaining to expediency and method have not been specifically dictated by the Lord. Therefore, human agency is involved in the formation and execution of such matters. In this case, who governs the local congregation? May congregations be bound by outside control or are they to be autonomous? The New Testament reveals

that each congregation is autonomous in these matters. That is, each congregation has the right to govern itself in matters of expediency and method.

This is necessarily concluded from two Biblical facts about local church government. First, God has given the elders (also called bishops, Titus 1:5-7) the authority to take the oversight of the congregation (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:5). The New Testament knows of no higher church "officer" than the elders of the church. Second, the elders are appointed for the local congregation. Every congregation should have its own elders (Acts 14:23; 1 Pet. 5:2; Titus 1:5). Church autonomy is virtually demanded by these two facts. Since there is no earthly authority higher than the elders and since the elders rule only in their own congregations, it necessarily follows that each congregation is subject to no human authority other than its own inhouse overseers.

Any organization, congregation, or person which operates in such a way as to make decisions for another congregation or seeks to bring that congregation under its oversight, is in violation of the principle of church autonomy. We must be very careful that we respect this principle.

In view of the above, we should remember that every congregation is free to form its own methods and expedients in doing the Lord's work. No one can adopt these things for another congregation, nor should anyone censure another congregation for the methods it has adopted, provided the methods do not violate the Scriptures. Such censuring endangers congregational autonomy for it places unauthorized pressure upon another congregation to conform to the human standard of those who judge. Congregations who respect their autonomy should not become intimidated by creed-makers of any kind.

### **Some Misapplications of the Autonomy Principle**

Autonomy does not mean **isolation**. Autonomy relates to the government of the congregation, not its communication with other congregations. Taking an interest in the works of another congregation, an-

nouncing their programs, supporting their efforts, praying for them, etc., does no violence to church autonomy as set forth in the Scriptures.

Being encouraged by the good works of other congregations and imitating their work is by no means a violation of autonomy. Paul used the good of the Macedonian churches to stimulate the Corinthians (2 Cor. 8:1-8). The zeal of the Corinthians was also a stimulus to the Macedonians (2 Cor. 9:2). The Thessalonians' faithfulness became an example to others (1 Thess. 1:6-7). Certainly, we should feel free to imitate the good things we see in other congregations without feeling that our autonomy is being invaded.

Loving the brotherhood is not limited by church autonomy. Peter said, "Love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2:17). Peter did not mean that we must love **only** those of our own congregation while ignoring all others. Did not Paul have anxiety for all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28)? Did not the church in Antioch send aid to the needy in the Judaeen churches (Acts 11:27:30)? Did not the churches in Macedonia and Achaia make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9)? Evidently, congregational boundaries do not limit love.

New Testament churches were not isolated from the spiritual needs of other congregations. The church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas, the exhorter, to the new church in Antioch (Acts 11:22-24). Several churches supported Paul as he labored with the church in Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8). Brethren ought to be concerned about the spiritual struggles of other congregations, offering assistance when possible.

Autonomy does not mean that congregations cannot cooperate. Cooperation and autonomy are evidently compatible because we find congregations in the New Testament working together with the approval of the apostles.

One of the great examples of a cooperative effort is the contribution that the churches in Macedonia and Achaia made to the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. You can read about this in 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:25-29. It



is interesting to note (especially in light of present-day notions about church cooperation) that these churches had a **common will** and purpose (Rom. 15:26). They were involved in a **common action**: giving toward the need in Jerusalem. They had a **common agent** whom they appointed to help deliver the contribution to Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:18-19). They had a **common minister** of their contribution: Paul (2 Cor. 8:19; Rom. 15:25, 28). Yet, this cooperation did not violate the autonomy of any.

Another example of cooperation is seen in Acts 11:27-30. There, the church in Antioch came to the aid of the churches in Judaea. In this case, Antioch sent a contribution to aid the poor in Judaea. This aid was sent to the elders in Judaea and, evidently distributed by them to the needy.

Here is a case where money collected by one church was sent to the elders of another church, who, in turn, used that money to meet a need. This type of situation does not violate the autonomy of either congregation.

### Conclusion

"Church autonomy" refers to the right of each congregation to govern itself in matters of expediency and method. Autonomy does not give any congregation the right to make its own decisions in matters of faith. Congregations may fellowship one another and work together without destroying each other's autonomy. Let us respect the autonomy of each congregation as well as the Scriptural application of the autonomy principle.

## In His Steps

### F.G. Smith, Spartanburg, SC

We have this idea in 1 Peter 2:21, "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." To Bible readers, it is plain that Jesus Christ is the author of the greatest standard of life known to man. The word disciple means follower. Are not all disciples followers of Christ? Did we not pledge to follow Jesus when we were baptized into Him?

#### What Does It Mean to Follow "In His Steps"?

We made the pledge to follow Jesus when we obeyed the gospel, but are we walking "in His steps"? What would happen if we ask the question before making any important decision, what would Jesus do? It would mean:

1. Many changes in the lives of most of us.
2. A complete change of many habits in our lives.
3. Possible social loss. Friends and loved ones may forsake us.
4. The loss of money in many cases. So, we must count the cost.
5. Self-denial and perhaps even suffering

at times.

6. What following Jesus meant in the first century.

Our Lord gives us the terms and conditions of discipleship in the following verses: "If any man serve me, let him follow me [in His steps]." (John 12:26.) "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked." (1 John 2:6.) "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23.) "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27.) "Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, follow me." (Luke 18:22.)

About 35 or 40 years ago, I read a book that gave a real meaning to following in the footsteps of Jesus. A group of church members made a pledge not to do anything without first asking this question, "**What would Jesus do?**" The editor of a newspaper was one of those who made the pledge. He said he would run his paper on this principle. He began to reject many ads that were not in harmony with his resolution. What happened? Well, as you might expect, he

began to lose money, and was on the verge of bankruptcy, when a young lady came to his rescue. She too had made the pledge. Some time earlier she had inherited a large sum of money. She gave the newspaper man one half million dollars so he could run his paper on Christian principles. He was a success, and a great influence in the community. Another man and his little girl also pledged to "do as Jesus would do." This man owned some rental houses, while he and his daughter lived in a mansion. One night, as they sat in their warm living room, the little girl said to her father, "Father, are those poor people that live in our houses warm like we are?"

Friends, the above stories illustrate the meaning of walking in **His steps**. What would happen if every Christian in America would make a resolution to walk in His

steps, and always ask the question, "What would Jesus do?" The society in which we live, the business world, the political system, and all commercial and governmental activity would be changed so much that human suffering would be reduced to a minimum.

If our definition of a Christian is simply to enjoy the privilege of worship, have a good time, have many respectable friends, attend our clubs and societies, and at the same time, avoid the worlds greatest stress, that of sin, because it is just too much sacrifice to go out and lead the lost to Jesus, or visit the sick and to help the poor and needy, then we need to learn what Christianity is all about. If this is our definition of Christianity, surely we are a long way from following in the steps of Him who sweat, as it were, great drops of blood and who cried out on the cross, "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" Are we willing to say, "Master I will follow Thee, whithersoever thou goest." Only when we say that, can we truly follow in **His steps**.

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# Startling Stats About Youth

Barry Fike, Charleston, SC

Did you know that at least 3,000 children are killed by **their parents** every year in the U.S.? And over 750,000 cases of child abuse and neglect are reported annually, according to Dr. Robert Bensel, professor of Public Health and Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. Another source says that at least one American child in ten is a victim of incest.

Did you know that suicide is now the number two cause of death among 15-24-year-olds (accidents are no. 1). Nationally, more than 5,000 teenagers and young adults commit suicide each year, almost twice as many as ten years ago, according to the **Chattanooga Times**.

Did you know that a recent survey showed that 45% of young people between the age of 12-18 drop out of the church?

It is enough to make one want to cry! However, it is going on in our cities around us. The question is: "What can I do about it?" Obviously, we cannot sit in the background and expect these problems to solve themselves. A wound untreated just gets worse and worse until it kills itself. We certainly do not want that to happen to our youth, so let me suggest six solutions that may help.

First, realize that no solution is going to be quick and easy. It took a while for problems, such as the ones mentioned above, to get started and it will take a while to solve them. However, realizing this should not lessen our zeal in working toward a solution.

Second, understand that the Bible is the only source of comfort to those that are sincerely looking for salvation in their lives. We all realize that when a child begins his journey into this world, that that is the time to begin to train him in the way that he should go. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest

down, and when thou risest up." (Deut. 6:6-7.) To say that a small child, even an infant, cannot understand the Bible, is nonsense. A small infant understands the concept of love and security so well that Christ taught that to become as a small child would lead one to heaven (Matt. 19:14). If they can be taught that Christ can give that to them and they dwell upon that fact when small, what will they dwell on when they get bigger? Obviously, the same fact that they were taught when they were small. The sooner that a child is taught the Bible, the better the chance to keep him in the church.

Third, strengthen the families in your congregation. To say such a thing and do it are two completely different ideas. Strengthening families is a continual process that goes from baby to adulthood and then recycles itself. A congregation needs a good educational program so that each child, teenager, and adult will have a chance to see what God can do with them. Each member of the family needs to know their duties to each other and to God. When they all realize to "provide for his own" (1 Tim. 5:8), then a better understanding of their relationship to each other may be reached and a process of how to solve the family problems can be started.

Fourth, if you do not have a youth program, begin one. If you do have one, stand by your Youth Director and back his programs. The hardest thing in the world for a Youth Minister to do is to have programs that no one attends. Brethren, there are more important things in this world than banquets at the schools, bazaars, and ballgames. With this type of emphasis, no wonder so many youth are leaving the church. They believe that in this life, only, they have hope in Christ. It has not been shown to them that the eternal life really is going to happen. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (1 Cor. 15:19.) Allow your youth the chance to become like Elihu, the son of Barachel, in Job 32. He said that



even though he was young, "There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

Fifth, encourage your youth to attend the youth rallies in the area. These are designed to strengthen our youth in today's society and to stand up for what they believe. If they do not attend, they cannot be helped in this way.

Sixth, understand what type of world your youth live in today. They do not live in the same one that you did several years ago. The peer pressure they undergo every day is tremendous. Drugs are found in any

school, even elementary, and are easily available to anyone wanting to escape the pressures of the world. Understanding this will help you in more ways than can be mentioned.

Do not allow your child to become one of the startling statistics of the world. Allow him to become a startling statistic of heaven. No person should despise their youth (1 Tim. 4:12). Our youth can, and will, be successful, encouraging, stronger Christians if we want them to. The training is up to us. What do you say?

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## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

### **Waddey Named New Director**

**Knoxville, Tenn.** It was recently announced that John Waddey will become the director of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions beginning with the fall term. Bill Nicks, the current director of the school since 1980, has requested to be relieved of his administrative duties so that he might continue his classroom work on a full-time basis. He will also be serving as the preacher for the Claxton church.

Waddey has been an instructor at the school since its inception and also helped to establish the school. He is the author of several books, has written hundreds of articles, and is known for his anti-abortion activities, all of this in addition to his regular preaching duties at the Karns Church of Christ for the past 14 years. When Waddey begins his school post, M.H. Tucker, also an instructor at the school, will serve as minister for the Karns church.

It is hoped by the Karns elders, who oversee the school, that this reorganization will help to bring the school's enrollment up to its capacity of 40 students in addition to broadening its base of support.

### **WCBC Raises \$1 Million**

**Abilene, Texas.** According to Robert E. Scott, president of the World Christian

Broadcasting Corporation, \$1 million of the projected \$1.7 million needed for the granting of a construction permit for an international short wave radio station has been secured as of the end of March. The station is to be built at Anchor Point, Alaska, and will enable listeners as far away as China to hear the gospel by radio. Scott further reported that the Federal Communications Commission has indicated that it may issue the construction permit for the station at any time. WCBC hopes to be on the air by January 1984.

### **LCC Offers Scholarships**

**Lubbock, Texas.** On March 30th, Lubbock Christian College announced that there will be 100 Presidential Scholarships available for the 1982-83 school year. These scholarships, up to \$1,000 per year, will be awarded to students who meet the minimum qualifications of a "B" average and a composite score of 20 on the ACT. The scholarships are one way in which the college is attempting to offset the impact of recent federal budget cuts. Lubbock Christian College is a four-year, fully accredited college. Students who might be interested in attending the college may contact: Mr. John King, Director of Admissions, Lubbock Christian College, 5601 W. 19th St., Lubbock, Texas 79407.

## Million-Dollar Gift to OCC

**Oklahoma City, Okla.** Dr. Terry Johnson, president of Oklahoma Christian College, recently announced that a Dallas,

Texas, couple has pledged \$1 million to the college. The gift, pledged over a five-year period, is for the OCC Endowment Fund and will underwrite a Chair of Christian Ministries.

# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Greensboro.** The new preacher at Friendly Avenue is Ron Newberry.

**Gastonia.** Greg Smith, a Freed-Hardeman College student will be working with the church through the summer.

**Statesville.** Ailene church also announces the addition of a worker for the summer. He is Mike Benson of Freed-Hardeman College.

**West Jefferson.** Rubel Shelly of Nashville will be heard over local radio each week in addition to the 20 minutes of radio preaching already sponsored by the church.

**Mooreville.** Howard Winters will be preaching in a meeting beginning June 20.

**Elkin.** Mitchell Floyd is now preaching at Elkin.

### N.C. Baptisms

Northview, Statesville, 1; Fayetteville, 5; Raleigh, 7; West Hickory, 3; Broad Street, Statesville, 1; Asheboro, 9; Gastonia, 2; Westside, Charlotte, 1; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 2; Providence Rd., Charlotte, 3; Wilkesboro, 3; Jacksonville, 1. Total: 38.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Spartanburg.** Five additional deacons have been appointed at Central, bringing the number to eleven.

**Columbia.** St. Andrews Road has announced that Thomas Eaves will be featured at their Youth Rally August 13-15. Thomas R. Bailey has been added to the el-

dership on May 9. Eight deacons have also been named.

**Greenville.** Correspondents should note the new mailing address of the Northeast congregation: 3506 Edwards Road, Taylors, SC 29687. The telephone number is still 244-7622. The following report is taken from the Northeast bulletin:

Another important chapter in the history of Northeast church of Christ is recorded this week as the congregation moves its place of meeting from 2414 Wade Hampton Blvd. in Greenville to 3506 Edwards Rd. in adjacent Taylors suburb.

Northeast, initially a nucleus of 17 baptized believers from other area congregations wanting to meet in a location nearer their homes, conducted its first service on January 3, 1960, in U.C.T. Hall in the northeast area of Greenville. In January 1964 it began construction of a meeting house on a 2.08 acre site at 2414 Wade Hampton Blvd. The first worship service at that location was on Sunday, August 2, 1964. Another important date in Northeast's history bearing mention is April 4, 1976, when, due to declining membership, the former Poinsett congregation merged with Northeast. In line with its declared objective to ultimately house the merged congregations in a new and larger property, on October 1, 1979, Northeast floated a \$400,000 bond issue to finance construction on a 7.7 acre site (including an existing preacher's residence) of an \$800,000 meeting house. For various reasons it was not possible to break ground for the new building until March 15, 1981. Following a memorable concluding service at 2414 Wade Hampton Blvd. on Wednesday evening, April 29, 1982, the extensive moving process began with the first service at 3506 Edwards Road on Sunday, May 2, 1982, at which 237 persons were present at the morning service.

# A Look At Books

**Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC**

**Man — His Fall and Redemption**, Howard Winters, Win-More Publications, P.O. Box 117, West Jefferson, N.C. 28694, 36 pages, paper.

This little volume contains 16 brief essays which were originally presented as 5-minute radio messages over the local radio station in West Jefferson, N.C. The author is the erudite editor of **Carolina Christian**. He loves to tell the story of human redemption made possible by the loving sacrifice of Jesus. These lessons discuss the nature of man, his fall into sin, God's gracious efforts to redeem man and man's obedient response to grace.

The brevity of these messages in no way obscures the profound work of love demonstrated by God in His efforts to provide the means of man's salvation. As a matter of fact, the brevity of the lessons makes the volume quite useful for mass distribution. This material, placed in the hands of an honest truth-seeker, will produce everlasting good. We heartily commend this work. It deserves a wide circulation.

**Stacy's Sermons**, John Stacy, J.C. Choate Pub., 185 pages, cloth, \$6.00.

This is a volume of full-content sermon outlines. There are four series of sermons presented in this book. The first is biographical discussions of the Apostles. The second discusses Jesus, the Christ. The third investigates the Non-Conversions in Acts. The fourth enumerates the Gospel Armor described by Paul in Ephesians 6. The material is well researched and well organized. It will prove to be a useful addition to one's library. The material on the Apostles is especially interesting and helpful.

Including all furnishings and adjacent church-owned preacher's residence on the 7.7 acre property, Northeast will have an investment of approximately a million dollars of the Lord's money. This imposes a tremendous obligation on the congregation to commensurately insure rich dividends for the growth of the Lord's Kingdom in Greater Greenville. Fortunately, it has a qualified, wise and capable leadership, an alert, busy diaconate, a dynamic Bible-knowledgeable preacher and a generous, cooperative congregation to insure that growth. The congregation needs now to realize that this fine new property as a working tool is not an end but a means to help insure the admirable objectives already in planning.

## **S.C. Baptisms**

Northeast, Greenville, 3; Duncan, 3; Edgewood, Greenville, 2; Greenwood, 1; North Charleston, 2; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 5. Total: 17.

## **Northeast Church Address Change Notice**

We hope to move on May 1st into our new Meeting House which has been under construction for the past year.

After May 1st, mail previously addressed to 2414 Wade Hampton Blvd., Greenville, S.C. 29607 or 29615, should be addressed as follows: Northeast Church of Christ, 3506 Edwards Road, Taylors, S.C. 29687. (Phone: 803-244-7622)

## **An Open Letter, Seneca Church of Christ**

This letter is to inform you that fellowship has been restored between the Seneca Church of Christ, 410 N. Fairplay Street, Seneca, South Carolina, and the Clemson Church of Christ, Clemson, South Carolina, as of April 3, 1982. (The Clemson church is not to be confused with the Foothills church of Christ.)

Brethren, we are asking that you publicly announce or post this information at your building. We do solicit your prayers and fellowship concerning this matter. We would be most happy to try to answer any questions that you may have.

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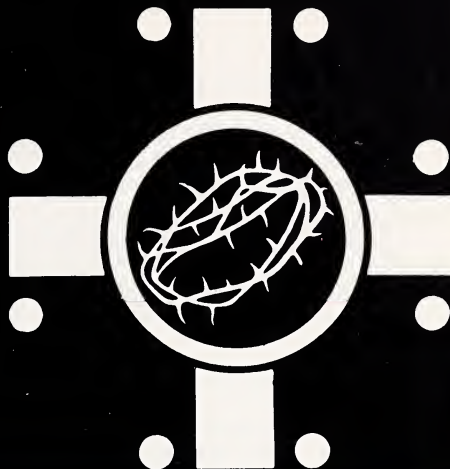
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 7, JULY 1982



C289.21  
C292

## THE PARADOXES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ Came into the World (1 Tim. 1:15; Matt. 20:28)	→ That We may Enter into Heaven (John 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:1)
Jesus Christ was Born in the Flesh (John 1:14; 1 John 4:2-3)	→ That We may be Born of Spirit (John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23)
Jesus Christ was Born of Woman (Gal. 4:4; Isaiah 7:14)	→ That We may be Born of God (1 John 1:11-12; 1 John 5:4)
Jesus Christ Became Son of Man (Phil. 2:5-8; Luke 19:10)	→ That We may be Sons of God (1 John 3:1-2; Gal. 4:6)
Jesus Christ Accepted Poverty (2 Cor. 8:9; Luke 9:58)	→ That We may be Made Rich (2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 2:7)
Jesus Christ was Rejected of Men (John 1:11-12; Isaiah 53:3)	→ That We may be Accepted of God (Eph. 1:6; Acts 10:34)
Christ Became the Man of Sorrows (Isaiah 53:3; Matt. 23:37)	→ That We may Rejoice and be Glad (Phil. 4:4; 1 Pet. 4:13)
Jesus Christ was Made Sin for Us (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22-24)	→ That We may be Righteous of God (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 3:7)
Jesus Christ was Put to Death (Luke 24:46; Matt. 16:21)	→ That We may be Made Alive (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:1)
Jesus Christ was Cursed on Earth (Gal. 3:13; Isaiah 53:7-8)	→ That We may be Blessed Above (Gal. 3:14; Rev. 14:13)



# editorial

## JIM GARDNER

Starting in this issue is what we hope will be a long, a very long (our hope is for forty or fifty years at least) series of articles by Jim Gardner, current minister of the Brewer Road church in Winston-Salem, N.C. The first series is entitled **The Foundation of Faith**. It deals with miracles, pointing out the difference in the true and false. This is a vital study, one that is only vaguely understood by our brethren and one that is absolutely misunderstood by most other religious people, especially the neopentecostals and all others who claim miraculous work among them today. We commend these articles to you because of their author, their contents, and their timelessness.

Jim is perhaps the most brilliant intellect it has ever been our privilege to know. He is a graduate of Harvard University, one of the most prestigious schools in America. But more than that, he is a Christian gentleman of the first rank, one who loves the Lord, the truth, the church, and the whole Christian system. He is extremely conservative in his approach to the Bible (proving that Christianity is not a system of ignorance or a system which cannot withstand the test of higher education) and is impatient with those who would, in their own learning, twist the divine message of Scripture to fit their own desires. With his educational background and his powerful intellect (in our judgment a true genius), his conservatism is both surprising and unexpected. But one cannot hear him speak, or read what he writes, without immediately concluding that here is a man who has dug deeply into the word of God, confronted the difficulties that have been alleged against it, and who has emerged a giant in the faith. The Carolinas have been blessed beyond words to express because he made this his field of labor for the past few years. And **Carolina Christian** is even more blessed to have him write for it (let the larger journalists among us eat their hearts out with envy). He will always give us

something we can bite into, chew on, and take a while to digest. It will be meat for the mature, the kind of material we all need.

Unfortunately Jim will be leaving the Carolinas this fall to go to Yale Law School, an aim that he interrupted in order to do the work he has been engaged in for some time. But we can take comfort in two facts: Jim plans to continue preaching the ancient gospel, regardless of what the future may hold, and he has promised to continue his writings for us while he is away in school. He is a great man, one from which we can all learn a great deal. Let us hope that when he has earned his law degree that he will return to the Carolinas. In the meantime, read every word he writes . . . and thank God without ceasing for him, for his love for the truth, and for the contribution he is now making to all of us through the pages of **Carolina Christian**.

## BOUND VOLUMES

Elsewhere in this issue (if it is not crowded out by more important matter) there is an ad offering bound volumes of **Carolina Christian** for the years from 1977 to 1981 at \$7.50 per volume. We hope you will take advantage of this: for this is the last time they are going to be offered for

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## EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION STAFF:

Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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this price on a regular basis. We regret it, but we are forced to increase the price of them to at least \$8.50. Why? Because our actual cost on them is \$12 per copy. It now cost us \$6 each to get them bound; the subscription price is \$5 per year for the paper; and it cost us at least 50¢ per volume to ship them to the bindery and 50¢ to return them to us. But in addition to this, we have been paying the shipping on them to our customers when payment accompanied the order, adding another 86¢ to our cost. So to get one to you we have an investment of \$12.86 (which does not include the cost of the package). We can no longer absorb this vast difference. We therefore suggest that if you want a copy at the lower price, that you order now (when the present stock is gone, there will never be any more).

## WITHOUT THE CHURCH

In June of 1980 we had the honor of baptizing into Christ, Geoffrey and Mary Powers of Lansing, N.C. From the first day of their Christian life they have proven to be one of the most devoted couples it has ever been our privilege to work with. They took the gospel to heart, made Christ the center of their lives, and have made Christian living the principle by which they live. God has richly blessed them and their lives grow more meaningful and happy with each passing day. Not long since, Mary made a beautiful, touching, true statement that sums up their philosophy of life and reveals their involvement, devotion, and faith. She said, "The church has become such a part of our lives that we would be lost in more ways than one without it." Indeed! This would be true of us all if we really knew what the church is and what our membership in it means.

Without the church, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15), we would be lost eternally, not because the church saves but because the church is the saved. But that is not all. We would be lost:

To truth and right.

To the friendship and companionship of the finest people on earth.

To fellowship in God's work of love (done through His people).

To all efforts at saving the lost.

To participation in helping those in need, both physically and spiritually.

To worship and devotion with those of like precious faith.

To help from and study with others who are interested in following the Bible and the Bible alone.

To the many opportunities which come to exhort and encourage others.

To the joy of seeing others obey the gospel.

To being a good example for everyone to follow.

To the hope of helping to make this world a better place in which to live.

To all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).

And many, many more.

How do people live without the church?

## PROPER USE OF THE BODY

While the human body is material, it was made by God and has a place in His scheme of things. God made the body and breathed into it the breath of life (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7). Jesus Christ came in the flesh (a human body) to redeem fallen man (John 1:1-3, 14; Phil. 2:5-11). He bore our sins in His body (1 Pet. 2:24). The body of Christians is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20). The body will be redeemed from the grave (Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15:35-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-4). And the glorified or risen body will be like the Lord's (1 John 3:2). Thus the body is not to be despised as if God had no purpose for it or no plans for its future. The purpose of the body is to do, in all of its organs, what God made it to do.

Everything is right when it is put to the use for which God made it. For example, God made the sex organs for pleasure and reproduction, but He limited that pleasure and reproduction in man to marriage. Thus sex within the marriage bond is good, useful, and right — it is filling the purpose for which God made it. But sex outside of marriage (fornication) is prohibited (1 Cor. 6:13-20). It is a use contrary to the purpose for which God made it. This means that the very nature of sin is to misuse or abuse created things. The body is no exception to this rule. To use the body, or any of its organs, as God intended it to be used is to do right; to misuse an organ of the body is

to sin. As an illustration of this, A. Lowell Altizer, who has a most unusual way of expressing things, said, in his Collinsville, Va., bulletin:

"Satan takes charge of our bodies by afflicting us with:

A closed mind  
A hard heart  
A tight fist  
A wide mouth  
A loose tongue  
A high head  
A spineless back  
A set jaw  
Deaf ears  
Closed eyes  
Wayward feet  
Weak legs  
Prayerless knees  
An accusing finger  
A nudging elbow  
A turned up nose  
A cold shoulder

"We can be relieved of these ailments by a daily application of the prescription of the Great Physician."

The prescription of the Great Physician is to put every member of the body to its proper use. When this is done, the body is an instrument of praise to God; when improperly used, it is an instrument of sin. We must therefore learn to use each member of the body for the purpose for which God made it.

## FOR OR AGAINST?

Paul, in one of his profound questions, asked, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31.) This is a rhetorical question, the kind which strongly implies its own answer. If God, who made the heaven and the earth, who loved man beyond human comprehension, and who spared not His own Son to save man from

sin, be for us, then none can be against us. Absolutely not! To be against us, when God is for us, would be to be against God. And to be against God would be to challenge His being, power, and justice in His scheme to redeem. Or to say the same thing another way, to be against God would be to assume power greater than His. This none can have and to assume it would be ludicrous to the nth degree. The creature cannot control the Creator!

But sad to say, the converse is also true. If God be against us, who can be for us? The answer is an emphatic none. The book of Nahum is a prophecy of the forthcoming destruction of Nineveh. Twice in this short book God told this ancient and wicked city that He was against it (2:13 and 3:5). Since God was against the city, no worldly power could save it. It was doomed beyond hope. God said that He would burn her chariots (that is, destroy her armies) and leave her in shame before the nations (that is, He would discover her skirts or leave her naked). He would thus make an utter end to her (1:8). The Lord had spoken and it would come to pass . . . and it did come to pass. When the Lord is against a person, place, or nation, none can be for it — none can successfully protect it from His fierce wrath. "Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him." (1:6.)

God is therefore both a God of wrath and a God of goodness (Rom. 11:22). Whether His wrath or goodness is poured out upon us depends on whether He is for us or against us. All our actions, whether in work, worship, or play, should be such as to assure us that God is with us. And the way to be sure of this is to do His will in all things as it is revealed in His holy word. This and nothing more; this and nothing less; this and no substitutes. The way to have the Lord against us is to fail to do His will, fail to live as He directs. The Lord is against all those who live in sin and disgrace, all those who degrade their souls, and all those who corrupt their lives.

Is God for or against you? The answer depends on whether you are for or against God.



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# The Foundation Of Faith (Part 1)

**James Gardner, Winston-Salem, NC**

It is commonly asserted, both by the enemies and by many of the supposed friends of Christianity, that faith and reason are naturally opposed. According to this view, men can believe in God and the Bible only by closing their minds to all contrary evidence and taking a blind leap into faith, with no better reason for their belief than a pious wish that it were true.

So far is this from being the case, that genuine faith is inseparably connected with, and built upon, an enlightened reason. Such faith alone may properly be called a virtue, for faith without reason is mere superstition, a vague religious feeling that worships, not the God of truth and light, but the dark imaginations of the human mind. It is not virtue to run from reality, nor wisdom to close one's eyes against the light, nor safety to dream of salvation. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) Honorable men do not wish the comfort to be had from pious lies, no matter how ancient and beautiful; but rather strive to find freedom in the truth.

Christianity can stand examination. It invites examination. Paul exhorts, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21.) God does not fear that we will search for truth too diligently, for there is no danger that we will prove Him false. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." (Ps. 19:1.) Every work of God testifies to His existence; and all His words prove His faithfulness. If any man seeks, but does not find, we may be certain that his failure comes not from too uncompromising an honesty or an excessive love for truth (there can be no such things), but from an unwillingness to lay aside the sins that cloud his judgment and obscure the plain evidence of God. Whoever seeks God with all his heart will find Him.

According to the Bible, however, the only place where God is to be found so

effectually as to bring grace and salvation to the finder is in Jesus Christ. Jesus claimed, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the father but by me." (John 14:6.) Christianity centers around Christ and makes no sense without Him. If He is the Son of God, that is the most important fact in history and the central point of the moral universe, and every wise man will build his life on the bedrock of Christ. If He was anything less than the Son of God, then His teachings become mere suggestions, rendered highly suspect by the pathetic pretensions of their author, and His church a useless, living lie, that wastes the energies and degrades the souls of men. Our decision in regard to the truth of Christianity, therefore, comes down largely to our judgment of Jesus. God has given us a firm basis on which to make this judgment. He did not send His Son into the world without evidence of whence He came, but provided that a host of miracles should be His witnesses. To understand that this was necessary, we need only imagine our own reaction were someone of our generation to make the claim for himself that Jesus made, while teaching what Jesus taught. After all, the teachings of Jesus were an insult and a challenge to the world in which He lived. Those who say that it is now necessary to update Biblical moral views because they no longer agree with human wisdom, on marriage, for instance, have evidently failed to recognize that Christianity has always been in conflict with the majority view of right and wrong. People listened to Jesus not primarily out of respect for His wisdom, but because they recognized the authority which His acts gave to His words. Their faith was won by the logic expressed by the formerly blind man in John 10:32-33, "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." If Jesus had not opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame to walk, raised

the dead, and demonstrated His power in countless other ways, hundreds of millions of people would not now call Him Lord.

The miracles of Jesus constitute a unique and sufficient proof of His divinity. The more closely they are examined and compared with pretended miracles of other

times, the more they are considered in the light of simple common sense, the more they will serve the purpose for which God designed them: "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31.)

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## THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN

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# Preparing For Marriage

Sara Kemp, Stanley, NC

Next to the decision to render obedience to God, the most important decision is the choice of a marriage partner. This decision will determine a lifetime of happiness or unhappiness for both partners. It will either make each one a better person and more effective Christian or it will cause unhappiness for both.

Marriage is ordained of God and has been in existence since Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:20-25). God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, so He prepared a helpmeet for him. God intended this first marriage to be for a lifetime and He intends the same for us today. Marriage is a lifetime commitment. In Malachi 2:16, it is stated that God hates divorce. What God hated then, He still hates today. It is interesting to note that other laws, such as the Law of Moses, have changed or been done away with to make room for the Perfect Law, but the laws concerning marriage have remained the same (Matt. 19:8).

We need to make a careful personal preparation for marriage because our future Christian service depends on it. It is impossible to develop in our everyday Christian life if we have an unhappy home. If our marriage is full of pettiness, bickering, hard feelings, jealousy, etc., we can be of no influence as a Christian. We cannot turn these attitudes off that we have at home and then present a calm, happy picture of a Christian to our friends and neighbors.

There is not a marriage in existence that will last very long if much hard work is not put into it. Much time and effort are put forth to obtain a good secular education. Sometimes this involves several years in col-

lege or other training programs. When a job is obtained, much effort is put forth to perform well so that raises and promotions will result. How many people work that hard and put that much effort into preparing for and building a good marriage.

"Self" is probably the biggest hindrance in building a successful marriage. Young people often enter marriage assuming it is a "50-50 deal." It can not be that way because most of us do not realize when we have done our 50% and each is unwilling or apprehensive about putting more into the marriage than the other partner. "Self" must be put aside and **all** efforts made by each partner to make the marriage successful.

There are some things, though, that can be done toward building a marriage as God would have it. Matthew 7:7 says, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." The first thing we can do is ask through prayer for God to help. It is His will that the only human institution that has been in existence since the beginning of time be for a lifetime and for a **happy** lifetime. God wants to help but He **cannot** help if we do not **ask**. He **never** forces us to ask for His help. Prayer is the greatest source of strength we have and we fail to use it. Next, we need to formulate a plan and set some goals for building a good marriage. We need to **seek**. If we are going on a trip, we **plan** which roads to take. We do not just get in our cars and take the first road we come to and **hope** we get where we are wanting to go. We need to apply this same principle to marriage. No marriage is going to succeed on a haphazard plan. We need to

decide what will make a successful and happy marriage and work that plan. We need to **seek** ways to reach that goal. Once prayer has been made asking God for help, plans and goals have been made, then action needs to be taken in carrying out that plan. A plan is only good if it is used. If all of these are carried out, success will follow. These verses are a direct, firm, definite promise from Jesus.

Just drifting along will not make a marriage work. When we are sick we do not just sit back and hope whatever we have will go away. We go to a doctor, get some medication and do everything we can to get better. If we decide to make a new dress, it takes work. Just because we have all the necessary ingredients — a pattern, material, thread — it does not mean that we have a new dress. In the same sense, just because a man and woman are married, it does not mean that they have a successful marriage. It takes work and effort. Marriage is an opportunity for happiness. It does not come gift wrapped. Much the same as a pattern and material give the opportunity for a new dress, so marriage gives the opportunity for happiness. Just getting married does not guarantee happiness.

God does not want us to have **good** marriages, He wants us to have **great** marriages. God never intended us to lead lives that are only moderately happy. He wants **every** area of our lives to be full and happy.

The four-letter word "ours" is necessary to incorporate into a married couple's life.

Before marriage, everyone is a **me** but when the "I do's" have been said, each partner immediately becomes the other half of **ours**. What was once **mine** is now **ours**. No longer is it what **I** want to eat, where **I** want to live, how **I** want to spend money. In no other relationship should the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) be applied more often and more lovingly as in the marriage relationship. No other contract affects so many people. The happiness and destiny of the spouse, children, relatives and the church are all affected by the marriage and the home.

In preparing for marriage, it is more important to be the right person than it is to find the right person. Careful personal preparation must be made by each person who is entering the marriage relationship. Only when each partner is willing to cheerfully and lovingly give 100% for the best interest of the other will a marriage reach the heights and depths that God intended for all.

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# I May Say Unto You Freely

Garry W. Ferrell, Mauldin, SC

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Jews on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2), used the tomb of the patriarch "after God's own heart" as evidence that Psalm 16:10 was a prophecy concerning the risen Christ. In presenting this evidence, Peter began by saying, "I may say unto you freely." (ASV). The presence of David's tomb in Jerusalem was all the evidence that was necessary to substantiate Peter's claim that it was Christ who had entered into the hadean realm and returned again. Only those who choose to blind themselves to the evidence could deny the validity of Peter's words.

In this article I will deal with three things that "I may say unto you freely" because the evidence to substantiate the statements that I will make is as plain as David's tomb.

1. **I may say unto you freely** that the church of our Lord is in the midst of apostasy. When preachers, elders and teachers among us assert that one can divorce for causes other than fornication, remarry, and continue to live together without sinning; when social drinking is tolerated; when near nakedness goes without rebuke; when unqualified men are given the oversight of the flocks of God; when brethren desire peace, unity and fellowship regardless of doctrinal differences, and that for the sake of numbers; when men who take a stand for the old paths of God's ways are ignored, ridiculed and/or are branded as "nit-pickers" and troublemakers by those who would be fence straddlers; is not the evidence of apostasy as clear as David's tomb?

2. **I may say unto you freely** that there are preachers, elders, and other church members who would rather close their eyes to errors among us than "contend earnestly for the faith," and this in the interest of numerical growth. Certainly we need to reach out to the masses, we need to be evangelistic, we need to win souls, but we cannot win souls by blinding ourselves to sin in the lives of those souls we are trying to win.

Elders are to exhort and convince the gainsayers, not tolerate their gainsaying. Gospel preachers are to "reprove, rebuke and exhort," not minimize sin (Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 4:2). Both elders and preachers need remember that if we fail to "give them warning from God" (Ez. 3:17), God will require their blood at our hands (Ez. 3:18-20).

Solomon had something to say about minimizing sin while opposing those who would take a firm stand against sin. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." (Prov. 17:15.) "He that sayeth unto the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them." (Prov. 24:24-15.) "They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them." (Prov. 28:4.)

3. **I may say unto you freely** that there are still some preachers, elders and other Christians who have not yet "bowed their knees to Baal." We pray that they never will. They realize that their common enemy is the forces of Satan, and that his devious, subtle forces are at work in the church through the preachers and teachers who sow the seeds of error and who blind their eyes to soul damning sin in others. They still take "the sword of the Spirit" firmly in hand and wield it against the forces of Satan both in and out of the church. They realize that they cannot preach the truth as they see it, but that they must preach the truth as it is in Jesus (I Pet. 4:11).

They realize that part of the great commission is "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19), and they endeavor to help God's people "continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel." (Col. 1:23.) This they do realizing that they must "take heed unto the doctrine . . . for in doing this (they) shalt both save (themselves) and them that hear (them)." (1 Tim. 4:16), and realizing that if they fight a "good fight," "finish

(their) course,” and “keep the faith,” they shall receive “a crown of righteousness . . . at that day.” (2 Tim. 4:7-8.)

Thanks be to God that the evidence of these is also as plain as David’s tomb.



# The “Giants Of God’s Kingdom”

**Mike Cope, Wilmington, NC**

We have read it, heard it preached, and discussed it in Bible class. But have we ever really let it sink in? “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you, must be slave of all.” (Mark 10:43-44.)

We often hear and read of those who are the “giants of the kingdom,” the “stalwarts of the faith,” and the “greatest workers in God’s vineyard.” Wouldn’t it be interesting to know whom God considers His greatest servants? Would it disturb us if

we discovered that many were unknown? That many were not preachers or elders? That some did not speak English or know the “Star-Spangled Banner”? That some were illiterate?

There is no way of obtaining such a list, of course, but we can at least know a lot about the criteria that would be involved in compiling it. Humility (Matt. 18:4) and undying service (Mark 9:35) would be of paramount importance.

Two years ago an elderly lady died in Memphis whom very few knew besides her brothers and sisters at church. She had no known relative anywhere in the world. She never was a “giant in the kingdom” by most of our standards, but she was great in God’s eyes. Hundreds of the members at that congregation have something in their home that she made for them. Many in her nursing home heard of the Lord’s church from her. She knew what it means to wash people’s feet (John 13:1-17). She was a servant.

People like this beautiful saint have a reward to look forward to; their faithfulness and service will make them great in the kingdom of heaven. God does not call us to be famous among men. Rather, He calls us to the least (yet greatest) position of all: the position of a servant.

## Be Ye Thankful

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

Could we ever adequately express our thanks to our heavenly Father for all the good things He has given us? With all our problems in America, is there any other place on earth you would rather live?

We occasionally sing the hymn, **Count Your Many Blessings**, name them one by one. We should practice that exhortation daily. Man is prone to take good things for granted. Ere long we get to feeling that life, health and provision are ours by right or deserve. It often takes an experience like Job’s to make us realize that the Lord gave and the Lord can take away His gifts (Job 1:21).

At a time in history when things look rather dark and dreary, when the news reports have the whole world scene draped in black, Christians need to look up unto Him from whom all blessings flow (Ps. 121:1). And though the situation may seem rather bleak to mortal eyes, He who rules the nations is working all things together for good to them that love Him (Rom. 8:28).

In the words of David, “Fret not thyself.” (Ps. 37:1.) In the words of Paul, “Be ye thankful.” (Col. 3:15.)

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# Build An Altar

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

"And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journey from the south even to Bethel, into the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord." (Gen. 13:1-4.)

Life is frequently pictured in the New Testament as a journey, or a pilgrimage (Phil. 3:20; 1 Pet. 2:11-12). It matters not, therefore, under what conditions we may live, life for us in this world is only a temporary stay; and the exhortation, "build an altar," in its practical sense, is entirely applicable to us.

We need an altar to turn to amid the business of life. Few of us are able to stand the pace of modern life; and unless we have an altar to which we may turn, we are likely to find that the poise and strength of soul which should be ours has been worn away by the bustle of life. All of us stand in continual need of being refreshed and stabilized in body, mind, and soul; and happy are we if, like Abraham, we know where to turn (Matt. 6:33). Faith in God has been called "the best preventative against the maladies of the soul, and the most powerful means of curing them." How often has one turned to the altar of worship, fretting with dark and vexing suggestions, feeling sore in body, mind, and spirit; but who came away calm, refreshed, all his cares gone, and rejoicing in the God of his salvation.

We need an altar to turn to when we have sinned. Abraham had sinned grievously while in Egypt. Outwardly he seemed none the worse for it; for it was to that sin that he owed much of his great prosperity. But for all his possessions he was not at peace. It was not merely that he had incurred the disapproval of Pharaoh, and still smarted from his rebuke; it was the sting of his own

conscience which troubled him, along with the knowledge that he had sinned in God's sight. And he knew that there could be no rest for his spirit until, at the altar, he had made a humble confession of his sin, and received God's forgiveness. There are, of course, those who have no sense of sin, and to them Abraham's experience means nothing; but those of us who know what it means to live with accusing conscience, because of our sins against ourselves, our fellowmen, and our God, the lesson is timely and forceful. We realize that until we have confessed our sins and received God's forgiveness there can be no peace within (Matt. 5:23-26).

We need an altar to turn to for a finer and nobler conception of God. What man in human history had a grander conception of God than did Abraham? This patriarch lived so close to God and was so devoted to Him that his Maker called him "my friend." (See Isa. 41:8; James 2:23; John 15:15.) Our religion fails to satisfy many; because the dust we stir up at the altar obscures the light and glow of the fire which should warm the hearts of others. What makes people pray when they are afraid, but indifferent when danger has passed? This attitude comes from a lack of sound teaching — from having glimpsed the altar only at a distance, from having seen it through a haze. Religion is not an opiate. It does not determine what will happen to us, but it does determine what we shall do with that which does happen to us (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 12:9-10). We who follow Christ are not immune to disaster (2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Cor. 11:22), but our religion enables us to turn disaster into triumph. We all need to go to the altar more often and commune with God.

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*"Opportunity may knock on the door but once or seldom, but temptation will bang on it forever."*

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# What Is Heaven Like?

**John Waddey, Knoxville, TN**

Heaven is a real place. It is the eternal reward for those who live for God in this life.

Earth's most wonderful and beautiful things are used to describe it.

— It is like a great walled city (protection from harm).

— It has many open gates (any who will may come in).

— It is described as the purest gold and precious jewels (the grandest, most beautiful paradisiacal garden with the river and tree of life). This reminds us that all lost in Eden by sin will be regained (Rev. 21:1-5).

— In heaven we will live in God's house — He as a loving Father watching over us (Rev. 21:3).

---

## To Be A Christian

**Tonnye Lynn Williams, Whiteville, NC**

In order to be a Christian,  
You must do more than listen.  
Have faith and pray,  
But then you're only half the way.  
Doing what is right;  
Helping friends in a plight;  
All a part of God's wondrous plan,  
Not to be ignored by man.  
Baptism is an essential part —  
Confession of the mouth straight from the heart.  
Much more it takes to make those pearly gates,  
But only you decide your fate.  
Your life is yours to give or keep,  
But when death around you creeps,  
Then it's too late to settle the score,  
To listen for teaching, praying for more.  
You had your chance when life was young,  
The song you sing is one that's been sung  
By many before and many again.  
But those old songs can't save from sin!

— It is a place of reunion with the loved ones and friends (Matt. 8:11).

— There we will not be tempted and led away from God, for Satan will be destroyed (Rev. 20:10), and there will be no sin (Rev. 21:27).

— Heaven is a place of moral and spiritual purity — as it was with man in the beginning (Rev. 21:27).

— It is a place of renewal for the sick, aged, and afflicted, a place of eternal life — with no fear of death (1 Cor. 15:50-54).

### Who Can Go to Heaven?

Jesus said, "Come unto me ALL ye that labor and are heavy laden." (Matt. 11:28-31.) No matter who you are or what you have done, you can be saved. The question is: Do you want to go to heaven? Will you comply with God's directions? Trust Jesus as your saviour (John 3:36). Repent of your sins (Acts 17:30). Confess your faith in Him (Matt. 10:32). Be immersed in water to wash away your sins (Acts 22:16), and to be added to His church (Acts 2:47). Live faithfully and heaven will be your home (Rev. 2:10). Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people!

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# What I Want To Leave My Children

**Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC**

As it is generally known, my whole life has been devoted to preaching the gospel of Christ, either in private studies, in the classroom, from the pulpit, or on the printed page. Everything I have ever possessed has been thrown into this work. I have never earned more than a minimum wage (most of the time it has placed me below the government's poverty line). I have had no saving account and no retirement plan (except Social Security). One of my greatest concerns has been that I might depart this life leaving my family with no place to live and no means of livelihood. When my children were small, this was a heavy burden. But time has largely taken care of the means of livelihood. My children are now all (except one) old enough to provide their own way in life. That I have been permitted to live long enough to see this is one of my greatest sources of satisfaction. I shall be eternally grateful for it. Recently we purchased a place and enough life insurance to guarantee my wife a place to live in case of my death. But as far as material things are concerned, I have nothing now, and the prospects are extremely slim that I ever shall have, to leave my children. This, however, does not bother me. I have never had a great desire to leave them money or property. But there are some things I do want to leave them — things of much higher value than material possessions.

1. I want to leave them the memory of a good home, a Christian home, a home where Christ was honored and where they were loved, appreciated, and cared for. But more than that, I want them to have the memory of a home that recognized Christ as its supreme head and the Bible as its guide — a home that recognized its Author as its Ruler. I have been a Christian all their lives so as to enable them to follow Paul's instructions: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." (Eph. 6:1.) We have tried to be the kind of parent that

would make it easy for them to "Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Eph. 6:2-3.) Furthermore, I have tried to make Paul's rule my rule: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4.)

Just as there are many things that should characterize a home, there are many other things that should be no part of it. No child of mine has ever heard me speak in a disparaging way of marriage or the home (I will not even joke about such holy matters). Nor have they ever heard even a hint from me of breaking up our home or any other by separation or divorce. They have never seen a drop of alcoholic beverage in our house, no form of gambling (not even a deck of playing cards by my approval), no immorality or any suggestion of it, no swearing or taking God's name in vain, no lying one to another, etc. Nor has anyone ever suggested to them in any way that they were an imposition rather than a blessing. I have tried to impress them with the concept that home is a little foretaste of heaven.

Of course we have not been able to make a perfect home for our children. No one has or could. We have had our difference and disagreements over rules and how severely they should be enforced. But I have always tried to be motivated by what will be best for them in the future — the best for them in making them the kind of men and women they should be, the kind the world needs. And I think when they are older and look back on their childhood, although they have not had it as well materially as other children with whom they have associated, they can remember it fondly as a good home, a home much better than average. If I can leave them that memory, I will be gratified.

2. I want to leave them a good example to follow — a good example in faith, in word, and in practice. I want to so live that if they

follow me in faith they will believe in God, in Christ, in the Bible, and the Christian system. I want their faith to enrich their lives just as mine has enriched mine. This cannot be unless Christ becomes their all-in-all. If they follow me in word I want their speech to be pure, holy, truthful. I want it to honor God rather than profane His holy name. I want them to use their power of speech to save the lost and build up the saved. If they follow me in practice they will work hard, be honest, decent, compassionate, concerned, loving, and useful. Their hands will be devoted to doing good, not evil. In short, I want to leave them an example to do good for both God and man.

The importance of being an example was impressed upon me when my children were still very young. One Sunday morning after we got home from worship, we decided to have a wiener roast in our back yard. While my wife was preparing the food, the boys and I walked across the street to a wooded area to get wood for the fire. The older (who was then about 5; the younger about 3) knew the woods well so he ran on ahead and went his own way. The younger followed closely behind me. When we had gotten into the woods he started, and we continued, the following conversation:

"Daddy, do you know what I'm doing?"

"No," I replied. "What?"

"I'm following you." When I made no immediate reply to this, he asked, "Do you know why I'm following you?"

"No," I answered. "Why?"

"So I won't get lost," he replied with great confidence.

I then and there renewed my determination that if he would keep on following me he would neither get lost in the words, in the world, nor in eternity.

The principle of the instructions given to Timothy by Paul should be burned into the hearts of every parent: "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.) Children will largely become what the parents were before them. Knowing this, I want to be a good example for my children to follow.

3. I want to leave them a good name, a name they can wear with pride. Solomon

wisely said, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." (Proverbs 22:1.) I believe this. If I can leave my children a good name, they will be better off than if I left them vast amounts of silver and gold, houses and land, stocks and bonds.

When our lovely adopted daughter was going out on her first solo date, I was deeply concerned. I had known about it for a week or so in advance and a thousand questions rushed through my mind. How would she react out alone with a young man? Had we successfully taught her our moral values or had we just forced her to obey them? Would she be able to control her natural passions when she was put to the test? Although I knew and trusted the young man she was going out with (he later became her husband), I also knew the powerful attraction of the opposite sex. As the day approached, my concern increased. Finally the night came, the young man arrived, and our daughter came out to meet him looking like the young lady she proved to be. I walked with her to the door, and then out on the porch. Realizing that this was as far as I could go with her, I gave her my final instructions by saying, "Honey, remember you are a Winters." She knew what I meant. She had a good name and her actions could either bring reproach upon it or continue its honor. Our name was respected in the community and I wanted it to remain that way. This she knew.

A good name should be the heritage of every child.

While I cannot hope to leave my children valuable possessions of a material nature, if I can leave them the memory of a good home (a pattern by which to build their own home), a good example (in faith, word, and practice), and a good name, their heritage will be far superior to any material fortune I might leave them. I want their lives to be enriched by higher values than worldly goods. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15.)





# The Son, And The Oath Of God

## (Part 2)

Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC

By referring back to what God had said to Abraham (Gen. 22:16), "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice," the Hebrew writer was drawing attention to the fact that God said this — "**on oath!**" "By myself have I sworn," saith the Lord (Gen. 22:16). That which God asserted on oath was that His counsel is immutable, that it cannot be changed, that whatever the appearances of the hour may have been to Abraham, that whatever the passing of the years may have brought to the nation of Israel, the one thing that remained certain was the immutability of the counsel of God!

The application at the moment was to the promise that He made: "I will bless thee . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22:17-18.) "Wherein God," the Hebrew writer continues, "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. 6:17-18.) God put Himself on oath that His counsel was immutable! And, that this is, at first sight, an arresting fact, may be emphasized by the fact that Jesus Himself forbade the taking of oaths, saying, "But I say swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the Great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." (Matt. 5:34-37.) Jesus was saying that they were to be such men that when they said yea or nay, they meant what they said, or that their word was their bond. And yet, God put Himself on oath!

So let us consider carefully the illustration which the writer employs to explain the matter, for he is careful to point out exactly what he means. He says, "For men verily swear by the greater." (Heb. 6:16.) That was the custom of that day and it is the custom yet today. And, in doing so, man is swearing by something greater than himself. Now, says the writer, in every transaction and utterance, the oath of man is final for confirmation, or is the basis of other men's confidence! If a man takes an oath by appealing to that which is higher than himself, it is supposed that that which he shall utter shall be the truth. And that is what the Genesis account tells us that God did, and this inspired letter to the Hebrews reaffirms that fact! But at once we see the difference: For a man taking an oath appeals to someone, or some thing higher than himself. This God cannot do, for there is none higher than Himself! Therefore, God took the human method, qualified by His own Being and Nature, and God's action was "final for confirmation," that is, it became the basis of confidence for Abraham. Some may say that there was no necessity for God to put Himself on oath, because of what He was in Himself. But we have here an illustration (of which there are many in the Scriptures) of God accommodating Himself and His method, to meet man in his need. The inspired writer shows this when he uses the phrase, "Willing more abundantly to show." (Heb. 6:17.) Man needed some confirmation beyond the mere declaration. And in man's dealing with his fellow man, the oath was the customary way or method by which such confirmation was gained, so God came down to that human level, and adopted the human method, and put Himself — **on oath!**

Therefore, since the oath of God necessarily depended upon His own final and complete authority, God swore by Himself! So now, conscious of the great confidence thus placed in that oath of God, the writer is showing how it had literally and com-

pletely been fulfilled in the Son of God! The intervening centuries had run their course, and now he speaks of Jesus, and shows how through Him, the oath is ratified and divinely fulfilled. The apostle Paul spoke of the seed of Abraham: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) And then, a little later, after declaring, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," (Gal. 3:27), he says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) Therefore, you see, God's promise to Abraham has come to the point of actual historic fulfillment! Christ is the seed fulfilling the New Covenant, and those who obey Christ's gospel are Christ's, and those who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to God's promise to Abraham of Genesis 22.

It is in this connection that the writer says that Christ has entered within the veil; as a **forerunner**, "Even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:19-20.) So this fact constitutes the "anchor of the soul," the ultimate secret of our confidence! The oath of God, fulfilled in the person of His Son, as He, "The Apostle and High Priest of our confession, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high," assures our heart!

The most important and arresting word here in this connection is the word **forerunner**! That word marks the difference between "Christ's passing within the veil" and everything that had preceded it in the Levitical priesthood. Aaron had entered within the veil once a year, but never as a forerunner. Aaron entered as the representative of those who were left outside the veil. But they were always left outside the veil. No one followed Aaron when he entered within the veil to stand in the presence of God. But when Jesus passed within the veil He went as a **forerunner** and the way was open for others, His brethren, to follow Him. He is the seed, in which and through which all nations are blessed. Therefore, all that are His, may pass with Him into the same place "within the veil,"

in the very presence of God! And the confidence of our soul is ratified, because Christ, the **forerunner** has passed within the veil, leaving the way open for us. Even as John the Baptist was sent by God as the "forerunner of Christ," Jesus was sent by the Father, in His ascension and enthronement in heaven, as the **forerunner** of His brethren, all who have obeyed the gospel by putting Christ on in baptism and remaining faithful unto the end. Jesus entered at once into the Holy Place, not in His own person only, but as our forerunner, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Jesus became the author of salvation for all. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:9.) Therefore, all who obey Jesus are His, Abraham's seed, and heirs of eternal salvation.

## NEW BOOK RELEASED

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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC

## Polish Church Legally Recognized

**West Monroe, La.** The White's Ferry Road church in West Monroe recently announced that at 2:00 p.m. on April 14, 1982, the churches of Christ in Poland were granted legal status by the Polish Government. The official recognition came as a result of the massive food convoy into Poland for the relief of Polish Christians last year. During the ceremony, attended by Polish and American dignitaries and church leaders from both Poland and the U.S., the Polish Minister of Religion praised the churches of Christ for their humanitarian concern for the people of his country. That praise was largely the result of the willingness of Christians there to share their food with their neighbors, hospitals and orphanages. The official status of the church means that it can now own property and openly evangelize without fear of suppression and ends a twenty-five-year struggle for official recognition.

Within weeks of the ceremony, another supply of food was delivered to our brethren in Poland. On May 3 the churches of Christ completed the largest food relief convoy to the country since martial law was instituted last year. The convoy, consisting of fifty trucks, was considerably larger than the much publicized convoy of last year. Film of the work was made by the Polish News Media and will be available for viewing by churches here sometime this summer. The film will be made available to interested churches by the Airline Drive church of Christ, 2125 Airline Drive, Bossier City, La. 71111.

## Horton Named Acting Bible Chairman

**Nashville, Tenn.** Howard Horton has been named as the Acting Chairman of the Department of Bible at David Lipscomb College, succeeding the late Batsell Barrett Baxter. Horton came to Lipscomb in 1980 as the missionary-in-residence and is now

an associate professor of Bible. In making the announcement, Lipscomb president Willard Collins said of the interim chairman, "Howard Horton has the respect of the brotherhood at home and abroad." No timetable has been set for finding a permanent chairman of the department.

## Texas Church Aids Victims

**Paris, Texas.** On April 2, 1982, a tornado struck Paris, Texas, leaving ten dead, 3,000 homeless and over \$50 million in losses. Among the homeless were 25 Christian families who suffered total loss. Members of the church of Christ in Paris immediately responded to the needs of the disaster victims. At the Lamar Avenue church a disaster center was established with ten area congregations jointly staffing the center. In just two weeks the Disaster Center has served almost 1,100 families. Anticipating a long recovery period, the Center is still serving the needs of those who were affected by the tornado. In expressing his thoughts about the disaster, John H. Cannon, Jr., preacher at the Lamar Avenue church, said, "We have seen so much bad, but we're amazed at the magnitude of good that is resulting. I wouldn't know how to tell you all the good things we've seen happen. Definitely the people of the community have a good perspective of the church of Christ. They found out that we really care about people."

## Prisoners Discover New Testament Christianity

**El Reno, Ok.** Few people would ever have imagined that the validity of the Restoration plea would be demonstrated behind the walls of a prison, but that is the story of the congregation that meets in the federal penitentiary in El Reno, Oklahoma. In 1978 Blake Williams was in jail in Louisiana awaiting his transfer to El Reno. A fellow prisoner, an illiterate teenager, asked



Blake to read the Bible to him. Although he began reading to the boy simply to accommodate him at first, Blake soon developed a genuine interest in the Scriptures. He then enrolled a group of fellow inmates to study with him and soon afterwards came to understand from that study that the Bible taught that penitent believers were to be baptized for their sins. A preacher was secured who baptized the men. In 1979 Blake was transferred to El Reno and led five others to Christ in eighteen months. The small group continued to study and worship together. In their search for a church that believed the same things they did, the group wrote several religious organizations asking for their views on certain Bible questions. In time they heard of the churches of Christ. The address of the Ridgewood church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas, was obtained and the men wrote the

church, asking eighteen questions concerning the basic structure and beliefs of the church. Rick Watson, one of the inmates, described their reaction to the answers given by the Beaumont church, "When the answer came two weeks later, we found it a carbon copy of what we ourselves were professing. I cannot describe the emotions that were experienced by us upon receipt of those few sheets of paper." Since July of 1981, over twenty-nine others have been baptized. The church continues to meet regularly and is active in evangelism behind the prison walls.

This prison church is an impressive demonstration of what God's simple truth can do when embraced by honest and searching hearts. These men have impressively proved the validity of the Restoration plea. We can be Christians only.

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## Carolina Church News

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29730. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Mooreville.** Mike Mobley reports that two people have recently been restored and identified with the congregation. One other was also restored.

**Charlotte.** Westside set new attendance records May 9 with 184 for classes, 264 for morning worship and 179 in the evening.

**Wilkesboro.** Don Kuritz, who has been one of the ministers, is relocating with the church in Shongaloo, La.

**Burlington.** Three men have been selected recently to serve as deacons.

#### N.C. Baptisms

Northview, Statesville, 4; Asheboro, 1; Providence Road, Charlotte, 1; Jacksonville, 1; Raleigh, 5; Salisbury, 5; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; Wilkesboro, 1; Westside, Charlotte, 2; Fayetteville, 3. Total: 24.

#### Wilmington, Pine Valley

Mike Cope has just moved to Wilmington to preach for the Pine Valley congregation. Reared in Southwest Missouri, he attended Harding College and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1978 with a B.A. in Bible. He then worked with the Hillcrest church in Neosho, Mo., for a year as an associate minister.

The last three years Mike has been at Harding Graduate School in Memphis where he graduated this May from the M.Th. program. His areas of emphasis were Greek, Hebrew, and preaching.

Over the past several years he has held several gospel meetings and has spoken in numerous youth rallies in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

He and his wife, Diane, have a three-month-old son, Matthew.

### SOUTH CAROLINA

**Duncan.** The church will be contributing each month in support of Joe DeYoung who will be preaching in Canada.

**Lexington.** Two have been selected to serve as elders. They are Ralph Jones and Wendle Northam. The congregation has re-

cently begun using a house next to their building for classes and office space. They have also started an expansion of their auditorium.

**Mauldin.** The new preacher is Garry Ferrell.

**Rock Hill.** The Preachers' Workshop will not meet in July or August due to summer

conflicts. Next meeting will be September 6.

## S.C. Baptisms

Essex Village, Charleston, 2; Edgewood, Greenville, 1; Northeast, Greenville, 4; North Charleston, 2; Myrtle Beach, 3; Newberry, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 3; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 1. Total: 17.

# Editorial Book Views

**The Stone-Campbell Movement**, Leroy Garrett; College Press, Joplin, Missouri; 739 pages, cloth \$19.95.

The subtitle reveals the author's attitude toward the movement he discusses — **An Anecdotal History of Three Churches** (he uses the term church in the sense of denomination). The "three churches" are Disciples of Christ, Independent Christian Churches, and churches of Christ. This includes the movement's liberals and conservatives and all in-between. While the author was formerly an ultraconservative, this book reveals the fact that he has now

become so liberal that it is impossible for him to be objective toward anything or anyone who smacks of conservatism (for example, he calls all the early editors who opposed the missionary society and instrumental music "Editor Bishops" but we can recall this being mildly applied to only one of the more liberal editors; he nearly always discusses the liberals as standing in the best tradition of the movement, but never so a conservative). The book seems to have been written to antagonize the churches of Christ, to appease the Christian Church, and to approve the Disciples of Christ. This lack of objectivity mars what could have otherwise been a truly great study of the Stone-Campbell movement.

While it is more of a thesis of the concept of unity in the early days of the Restoration Movement than a history, it has many fascinating pages about the pioneers who renounced denominationalism and called for all God's people to unite on the Bible and the Bible alone as the only source of religious authority. It details how their quest for unity became bogged down as they discovered and put into practice great, essential, and fundamental truths found in the Scriptures. The religious world refused to accept the Bible and what it taught. They therefore had no alternative but to stand alone or to compromise the truth. The conservatives among them increasingly put more emphasis on being true to the Scriptures, saying that unity on the Bible was the only Scriptural unity. The liberals continued to plea for unity, even when it meant surrendering some Biblical truth (such as baptism being essential to the forgiveness of sins; the more liberal came to accept the pious unimmersed as true children of God). So the question became unity even if the

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Bible was not followed or unity only upon God's revealed will in both faith and practice. The Disciples of Christ took the former course; the churches of Christ the latter; the Christian Church tried to reach a compromise between the two, not being willing to go as far as the disciples and yet not willing to settle every matter by the Bible itself. This book seems to conclude that it is better to be united with the people of all denominations than to be right doctrinally; we believe that to be right (to stand on Scriptural grounds) is better than to be united in error, if a choice must be made. To be united is right, both good and pleasant, but to be united in error is wrong, regardless of how desirable unity may be. So the thesis of this book is unity — unity though the truth is not taught by all.

We would therefore not recommend it as a manual for unity, but as a history (even though one-sided), it has many commendable things to offer. It will help one to see the problems, attitudes, philosophies, and doctrines which divided a movement born to unite. For the discerning heart and mind, it will repay many rich dividends and give some delightful insights to both the concepts of unity and the restoration of the ancient order of things. It also forcefully shows the tragedy of the division which has resulted in what Garrett calls three churches but which we would prefer to call, in the case of the Disciples of Christ and the Christian Church, departures from the truth.

**The Spirit and the Word**, Z.T. Sweeney; Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, TN; 148 pages, paper \$3.95.

This is a recent reprint of an old but valuable work, one that will never become outdated. The subtitle is revealing: "A Treatise on the Holy Spirit in the Light of a Rational Interpretation of the Word of Truth." It deals with the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments, His relation to the work of John the Baptist and Christ, the personality and divinity of the Spirit, His work through the apostles, in the apostolic church, in conversion, and in the Christian. Every subject is treated rationally, Scripturally, forcefully, clearly, and concisely, unquestionably showing that the Spirit works to-

day, both in converting the sinner and in indwelling the Christian, through the word of God. It is perhaps the best brief study, covering practically the whole spectrum of the Spirit's work, to come out of the Restoration Movement. No serious student of the word can afford to be without it.

**Bible Studies — Genesis-Deuteronomy**, Vol. I, **Bible Studies — Joshua-Nehemiah**, Vol. II, R.L. Whiteside; Inys Whiteside, 1103 Bernard St., Denton, TX 76201; 281 and 323 pages, respectively, paper \$7 per volume.

Those who know R.L. Whiteside will welcome this series of Bible studies. Few men in the Restoration Movement have had the insight to Scriptural teaching as he did and perhaps none were or are able to analyze and state its contents clearer or more concisely. He was always able to cut through all the theological difficulties seen by some and get right to the heart of the matter. He had a strong faith in the Bible as the only and all-sufficient source of faith and practice and his only desire was to enlighten others as to its contents so that they might know and do the will of God. The books consist of the material he prepared for the adult quarterlies of both the **Firm Foundation** (1928-1930) and the **Gospel Advocate** (1933-1936) and for the **Gospel Advocate Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary** (1937-1944). His daughter, Miss Inys Whiteside, has arranged them in such a way as to form a running commentary on the Old Testament (of course, not every chapter and verse is commented upon, but there are "lesson links" which tie many of them together). For those who need help on the Old Testament (and all of us do), here is a gold mine that will reward anyone who will take the time to explore it. We think that every student of the Bible should have it within arm's length as he studies the book divine. We therefore recommend that you get both volumes immediately (and anything else that Whiteside wrote), use them, and you will be a better person because of your increased knowledge of and appreciation for the word of God.

**All books reviewed here may be ordered from Carolina Christian Bookstore, P.O. Box 8324, Sta. A., Greenville, S.C. 29604.**



## A Look At Books

### Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

**The Church of the Bible**, J.C. Choate, J.C. Choate Publications, Winona, Miss., 85 pages, paper, \$1.00.

The material in this book originally appeared as a 13-lesson correspondence course and was published weekly in **Weekend** magazine in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It is in its 15th printing and has been published in English, Hindu, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Spanish. The lessons all deal with fundamental aspects of the church. The material here could well be studied by one searching for the Lord's people today. It could also be used as a study guide in a Bible school class. (It would be suitable for Jr. high and older students.) It has been used extensively and it has been productive of much good. Because of its proven track record, it ought not be overlooked when searching for materials to use in winning the lost to Jesus.

**Power-Packed Sermon Outlines**, John Harris, J.C. Choate, Burton Drive, Winona, Miss. 38967, 119 pages, paper, \$2.00.

This is a reprint of Harris' book, **Soul-Saving Sermons**. It has been in print for 20 years, having enjoyed a wide circulation and without doubt has been productive of much good. John Harris is a big man, both physically and spiritually. He is truly one of the "big preachers" in our brotherhood. The lessons here are simple in construction and fundamental in content. At the close of the book, brother Harris has some "Points With a Punch." Among the "points" are these:

"Never put a question mark where God has put a period."

"If you hid your receipt in your Bible, no one will find it."

"People who are blind spiritually rely on feeling for heaven."

"I call preachers gentlemen — Christ called them hypocrites."

"You don't want my advice, you want me to agree with you on something."

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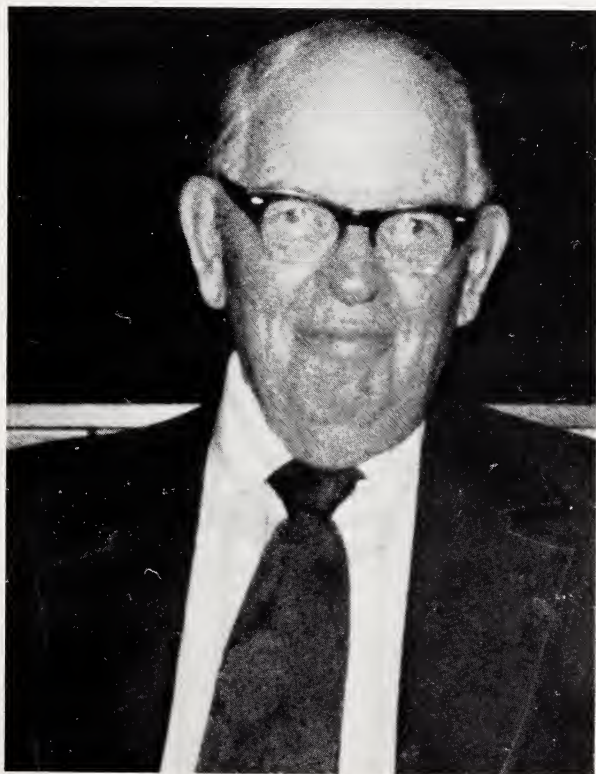
# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 8, AUGUST 1982



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**Ralph S. Church, 1901-1982**  
(See Page 12)

# editorial

## FREEDOM

Freedom is the birthright of every Christian, and no man has the God-given right to deprive a single one of us of that freedom. Paul wrote, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1.) The NIV renders this verse, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." The context shows that the bondage here is the bondage of the law (and the bondage of the law is the bondage of sin — that is the bondage of living under a system which has no means of forgiving the violator). Thus a loose paraphrase of the verse might be, "Christ has provided us with the means of freedom (from law and sin) that we might be free (from law and sin)."

Freedom is an awesome subject, one that we have not often understood nor fully appreciated when it is understood. We are so oriented to dogmatism that we are afraid to admit freedom or to permit its practice. We want it for ourselves but do not trust it in the possession of others. We have for some unknown reason concluded that to permit freedom in others, that is to permit in others the same freedom we claim for ourselves, as the Bible teaches it, would be either to compromise the truth or tolerate error . . . or both! Perhaps the chief cause of our fear of liberty is a failure to limit it to its Scriptural concept, to understand what it is as well as what it is not.

### Freedom Is Not

Scriptural freedom is not freedom from all rules, standards, restraints, or authority. There is no such thing as absolute freedom — freedom from all restraints and restrictions, freedom from all rules and laws, freedom to do as one pleases without consequences. God has never given man such freedom. The great freedom, Bible freedom, is the liberty to do God's will, to do as God pleases. Nor is Scriptural freedom the liberty to believe any doctrine that may

tickle one's fancy. God has always demanded that we believe the truth and reject falsehood (e.g., 2 Thess. 2:11-12). And in matters of religion, falsehood is anything not revealed in the holy Scriptures. No man is thus free to believe unrevealed things and then expect his faith to be the faith that saves. Falsehood is falsehood still, even though it may be sincerely believed. Truth is still that which frees (John 8:32). Again, Scriptural liberty is not freedom to practice in religious matters anything or everything that man might devise (2 John 9-11). Man-made religious practices have no spiritual value. That is to say, they are not acceptable to God. Christianity is a revealed religion and one must practice only that which is revealed. Paul wrote, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21.) This means to prove all things by the Bible. Hold fast that which it teaches. This is God's will. But if we prove all things and hold fast only that which is proven, we must reject that which is not proven. Hence Scriptural freedom is not freedom to hold fast (believe and practice) unscriptural things, but freedom to believe and practice the truth as it is revealed in the Scriptures.

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## Freedom Is . . .

What then is Scriptural freedom? It is, in the context quoted, freedom from the law. And ultimately freedom from law means freedom from sin. One could not be saved under the law or by the law (Rom. 3:20). The purpose of the law is to condemn violators, not to justify them. That is, once one sins under law, he is brought under bondage to sin because law knows only penalty, not pardon. Hence under the law one could not be free. But Christ came and died in man's stead (Rom. 5:6-9), and by His death He set man free — free from the penalty and bondage of sin (Rom. 6:16-18). Thus for freedom we were set free — we were set free from the law which held us in bondage to sin. When Paul speaks of freedom he means freedom from the law, which ultimately means freedom from the penalty of sin. Freedom is therefore freedom to live in Christ — deliverance from the death penalty of sin.

While freedom from law and sin is the true freedom of the children of God, we do no injustice to this divine principle by expanding upon it to apply it to our present situation (the atmosphere of dogmatism, binding human conclusions, rules, expediencies, and judgments, and rejecting brethren for differences where differences are permitted). In fact, we must expand it to cover the binding of human systems because freedom from law, and consequently freedom from sin, means that we are not bound to any such systems, creeds, organizations, or judgments. Now this kind of freedom has nothing to do with the fact that we are bound by the gospel, the very system that frees us from the law and the penalty of sin. To be freed by the gospel is freedom indeed (John 8:36). Freedom then involves the following:

### Study — Determination

1. Freedom to **study** the Bible and **determine** for ourselves what the Scriptures teach. We must live in view of the fact that we will be called to account for our own conduct (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10), measured by the divine standard, the word of God (John 12:48). No one has a right to bind on our conscience anything that is not

bound in the Scriptures, and even the Scriptures should not be bound on our conscience until we ourselves have learned what they teach. In short, we should bind our conscience only by a personal knowledge of divine instructions. Many young Christians have said to us, on numerous occasions, when they have observed honest difference among the more learned and mature brethren, "Why do we differ? Why doesn't someone determine what the Scriptures teach, and thus what is right, and settle the matter once and for all?" Well, this is in essence asking, "Why doesn't someone write a creed and bind it upon all of us so as to eliminate all differences among us?" That would settle the matter if all are willing to submit their conscience to the study and dictates of someone else. But quite frankly, we are not willing to submit to the creed or conclusions of another. We believe we have freedom to study the Scriptures and determine for ourselves what they teach. God has never demanded that we submit to the study and determination of another. Thus instead of mistrusting and trying to crush the conclusions of others, we ought to encourage independent Bible study, even though the consequences may be the reaching of different conclusions.

The fact is, even as uncomfortable as it is to live with, each is under obligation from heaven to study the Scriptures and determine for himself what they teach. And as long as we have this freedom (which imposes the obligation), as long as we are on different levels of learning, and as long as we are working from different sets of facts (even within the Scriptures themselves), we are going to reach independent conclusions. The differences cause no serious problems as long as we are willing to keep on refining them by the divine revelation — as long as we study and make our determinations by the teachings of the Bible alone; the problems arise when we crystalize our own conclusions and shut out any further light from the Scriptures, light which someone else may have discovered. Thus rather than lamenting the fact that we differ, and being so fearful of it, we ought to thank God that each of us has the freedom to study the Bible for himself and determine what it

teaches — thank God that the conclusions of no other man is bound on our conscience.

### **Believe**

2. Freedom to **believe** what the Bible teaches. When we study the Bible and learn what it says, we do not have to ask any man whether we can believe that or not. We can believe it because God said it and not because some man has given us the “true” interpretation of it. Faith, true faith, Scriptural faith, comes by and is based upon the testimony of the Scriptures (Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31). No one, therefore, controls our faith. No one determines our faith for us. We simply believe what the Scriptures teach. That is our faith. When the Bible says it, we have freedom to believe it, even if no one else known to us accepts it or believes it, even though it may disturb our friends and neighbors, even though it may go contrary to what we have always believed, and even though it may disturb the tranquility of the group of which we are a part.

This freedom to believe the truth in no way justifies or encourages false beliefs or doctrines. In fact, it is freedom from both — no false system of faith or doctrine can be bound on us. When one believes the Bible, and only the Bible, when his faith is based upon what he himself has learned from his study of the Scriptures, he has no reason for believing and accepting that which is not clearly revealed therein. It is a departure from the Bible, not a sincere study of it, which leads to erroneous faiths and practices.

### **Practice**

3. Freedom to **do** (or practice) what the Scriptures teach. When one studies the Bible for himself and arrives at the conclusion that a certain matter is taught therein, and he believes that matter to be the will of God (thus binding it upon his conscience), no man or group of men has a God-given right to prevent him from practicing it. To try to prevent him from doing his duty as he sees it is to deprive him of his freedom in Christ. Paul was reared in the Jews’ religion (Acts 26:5; Gal. 1:13-14). He was converted

to Christianity (Acts 9:1-20; 22:1-21; 26:2-23). The Jews then tried to limit his freedom to do the will of God as it was revealed to him in the gospel by insisting that he keep the law. He absolutely refused their dictates. He thus recognized and exercised his freedom to serve God as the gospel revealed. Of course the Jews tried to kill him for his refusal to bow to their dictates. And they eventually succeeded by the hands of the Romans, but when he died, he died a free man in Christ.

Freedom to do what the Scriptures teach does not in any way imply freedom from what the Scriptures teach (that is, freedom to do wrong, to fall short of, or to go beyond that which is written). Freedom in Christ is freedom to practice what one learns from the Scriptures. This is simply to say that each man is free, under God, to practice the faith once delivered (Jude 3). He may practice something that is not in “the faith” and thus be wrong, but no one has the right to prevent him from practicing his faith, and no one has the right to bind his own faith on another. The righteous live by faith (Rom. 1:17) . . . their own faith! Thus each one is free to do the will of God as he has determined it from his own study. And that is the center and circumference of New Testament freedom.

### **Live**

4. Freedom to **live** by the Scriptural standards alone. This simply means freedom from the binding power of pope, council, or creed. No Christian is bound by God to a rule or law devised by some man or group of men. The Scriptures alone determine one’s duty and how he is to conduct himself. That is, the Scriptures alone are all-sufficient as the guide of life and conduct.

### **Teach**

5. Freedom to **teach** the Bible as the only source of faith and practice. When one determines what the Bible says, on any subject, he not only has freedom under God to practice it, but he is also under the highest possible obligation to teach it to others. This freedom, and consequently the obligation, does not extend to anything except

that which is taught in the Scriptures (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV). No one is under obligation to say, or do, or feel, or think anything not delivered to us by inspiration, regardless of who may try to force it upon him. But everyone, who is true to his calling, must teach the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the source of his faith and practice. What the Bible says all Christians have freedom to say without the permission or consent of anyone, anywhere, anytime. But he has no freedom from God to say more. Our freedom to teach is thus limited to the Scriptures.

### Change

6. Freedom to **change** when we study the Bible and find that we are wrong. Change for change's sake is deplorable, but to fail to change when truth demands a change is dishonesty at its lowest level. The Pharisees of Jesus' day were so locked into their traditions that they would not change when they were confronted with truth (Matt. 15:1-9; 23:1-33). Some among the Jews were not able to change, even though they seemed willing to believe in Christ, because they would be thrown out of the synagogue (John 9:18-22). In short, they were denied the freedom to change, even though truth demanded it, because a change would disturb the system of which they were a part. They could change, but in order to do so they would be forced to leave the synagogue. The twelve men at Ephesus changed (that is, they were rebaptized) when they learned that their baptism was not that of the Great Commission (Acts 19:1-5). Thus freedom to change, when truth demands a change, is an imperative of the Christian system.

Freedom to change means that we are not bound to any system, authority, creed, or doctrine to the point where we must reject truth rather than change to conform to it.

Scriptural freedom is thus the freedom of truth — we are free to go wherever truth leads. Consequently we are free to depart from any system or belief when that system or belief is not in harmony with truth. If truth leads us to change, then change we must, even if the whole world resists it.

### Conclusion

To sum up, Scriptural freedom is freedom from the law and the bondage of sin. Under the Christian system, our sins are forgiven by the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). We are therefore free from sin — the freedom provided by the scheme of human redemption revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:16). As a consequence of this freedom, we are free (and this freedom imposes an obligation) to study the Bible and determine for ourselves what it teaches; we are free to believe the divine message; we are free to practice what the Bible says; we are free to live by its divine precepts; we are free to teach God's glorious plan to others; and we are free to change when change is necessary to conform to truth. In short, freedom is freedom to do God's will. It is not freedom to sin, it is freedom from sin; not freedom to believe a lie, but freedom to believe the truth; not freedom to do as we please, but freedom to do the will of God; not freedom from all restraints, but freedom with no restraints but truth. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36.)

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# The Foundation Of Faith (Part 2)

**James Gardner, Winston-Salem, NC**

Pointing out the mistakes of others, though it may often prove the duty, seldom constitutes the pleasure of a good man. The more he loves righteousness, the more he sees the need for patience and forgiveness, and the less he delights in discovering the faults of his neighbors. Nevertheless, the correction of error is necessary, both so that those who are honestly ignorant may be instructed to a better life, and so that all men may be warned not to "fall after the same example of unbelief." (Heb. 4:11.) This no doubt explains why God devotes so much of the Bible to a history of human failures.

No error demands refutation more than those that destroy the reputation of truth, and this is especially the case in regard to pretended miracles. While they prey upon the ignorance and desperation of the credulous, they work a subtler deception among the educated and the proud, who, congratulating themselves on discovering the fraud of counterfeit miracles, rashly conclude that no true ones have ever taken place. Even a casual reading of the New Testament, however, should make anyone reluctant to dismiss Jesus as a fanatic or a cheat, and the wonders He is reported to have performed differ strikingly from what are claimed as miracles today. An understanding of the uniqueness of Christ's miracles will highlight their value as evidence to His divinity.

First of all, the miracles recorded in the Bible are physical events that defy all possible explanation. It is not uncommon today to turn on the television set and hear an account of a "miracle" in which someone was "healed" of smoking. You will not hear detailed accounts of anyone being healed of a withered arm. Some report that they have been "healed" of hatred, which, if true, is good news, but hardly a miracle. Perhaps the most famous of American faith healers lists the following as "miracles" that have occurred in his life: narrow escapes from harm in accidents, light casualties in his audience from a tornado, the conversion to

religion of carefree boys, so-called speaking in tongues, someone telling him he would get well when he was sick, overcoming a tendency to stammer, a bank loan, and large contributions. If such were miracles, then no one could deny that they daily occur, but none of these events has any miraculous quality at all. The essence of a miracle, as the word suggests, is that it be truly amazing, an astonishing, undeniable, inexplicable intervention into the physical universe. There is nothing astonishing about a hospital visitor telling a friend he will eventually get well, and bank loans cannot be traced to the Holy Spirit. I myself overcame a speech impediment as a child, but I never thought to claim it as a miracle. Dressing up the common events of life in a dazzling cloak of religious enthusiasm does not transform them into wonders, but degrades them into lies.

Consider in contrast to the list above this selection of Christ's actions: rising from the dead, stilling a storm (no casualties reported), restoring her son to the widow of Nain, instantly healing the sick, giving the gift of language to the deaf and dumb, and obtaining his tax money from within a fish. Every single one of His miracles is a physical event requiring divine intervention. It has been foolishly suggested that the disciples were easily impressed by Jesus because they were ignorant of modern science, as if one needed to know the law of gravity to understand that ordinary men do not walk on the waves. Atheists often complain that the miracles in the Bible are impossible, but that is precisely the point: without God, they are impossible, and thus their occurrence is a proof that God exists. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:27.)

Many Catholics who have visited Lourdes, the center of Catholic faith healing, have joyfully described the extraordinary sense of well-being which pilgrims experience there. Some have enthusiastically claimed that this spiritual blessing is a miracle given to all who come, even though the vast majority must leave in the same

state of physical health in which they arrived. It cannot be emphasized too much that Jesus did not just make sick people feel good, He made them well. This is not to say

that emotional encouragement is not a good thing, for certainly it can be priceless. But it is not evidence of anything. It is not a miracle.

# The Salt Of The Earth

**Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC**

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matt. 5:13.)

The words of our text are usually recited as an admonition to get folks professing Christianity to do more — to realize their potential. It strikes me that the Lord is not encouraging as much as He is warning. Jesus does not exhort His disciples, those who are following the Beatitudes, to **become** the salt of the earth. Rather, He states emphatically, "Ye are the salt of the earth."

While it is true that salt has a number of functions; for instance, it enhances the taste of food and can be used to purify. In the ancient world, it had a primary function — to preserve. It is the role of a preservative that gives salt its inherent value. With our modern processes for preserving foods with our abundant supply of pure salt, we cannot fully appreciate the compliment and the responsibility Jesus is giving His disciples. In the ancient world, salt was valuable. Our word "salary" is a derivative of the Latin word for salt and came to mean wages, because Roman soldiers were sometimes paid with salt. Sometimes we honor an individual by saying of him, "People like that are the salt of the earth."

Jesus made a very serious indictment against this old world in His statement, "Ye are the salt of the earth." And that is, the world left to itself will rot. Society in general is in a serious state of decay. I am convinced the thing that has delayed the sure return of Jesus for His saints is the influence they are exerting. Make no mistake. The world has not continued to stand because of God's respect for the scientific, medical, literary, artistic or social advancements the world has made. To the

contrary, the world remains intact today because of the "saltiness" of God's saints. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah would have survived until this day had they had a little more salt. But for lack of salt (true followers of God), they were destroyed with fire and brimstone.

When we appreciate the work being done by salt, we can understand why salt losing its savour is such a tragedy. Salt that has lost its savour, or its "saltiness," is worse than useless — it is dangerous. Just empty the water from your ice cream freezer on your front lawn if you need an illustration of this point. The Christian who is not influencing the world for good is like salt that is not salty. Jesus says he is "good for nothing."

Salt has no preserving power in the box or in the shaker. Salt cannot add flavor or zest to food it never touches. In the same way, Christians must be in contact with the people of the world if they are to be influences for good. Jesus said of His disciples, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world . . . as thou hast sent me into the world; even so have I sent them into the world." (John 17:16, 18.) Salt can have no influence if it remains in the shaker. Christians can have no influence if they remain in their church houses.

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# Christ's Death And The New Covenant (Part 1)

Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC

Having considered the superiority of the New Covenant, the writer of the Hebrew letter, in chapter nine, turned to the subject of the superiority of the worship that is made possible through God's Son. We find the word worshipper in Hebrews 9:9 (ASV), as the writer says in reference to the tabernacle, "Which is a figure for the time present; according to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices which cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect." The word is found again in the "plural" in Hebrews 10:2, but these are the only places where the word occurs in Hebrews, however, the cognate or related verb occurs in Hebrews 9:14, where it is rendered "serve," in this question: "How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

And this is an arresting fact, showing the relationship between worship and service! For in the hour of Jesus' temptation, He said in answer to Satan, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10.) Worship, in the final analysis, is the secret of service; and service is an expression of worship! Our first thought of worship is that of rendering homage and adoration in the presence of God, whether by an individual soul, or by a group of souls. The outcome of such worship, however, is of necessity, that of service to God! But here we are principally concerned with worship to God, as adoration or worship of devotion.

As one can readily see, from a study of Hebrews, the background is ever that of the Israelites, their history as God's chosen people! And in order to bring into clear view the beauty of worship as is made possible through Jesus Christ, the writer goes back to the worship of the Israelites, the chosen race.

It is good, therefore, for us to recall the background of the ritual of the tabernacle, its worship, and its service. As we look at that background, it is very important to

remember that the inspired writer did not go to the temple but to the tabernacle. This is in itself significant. Writing, as he certainly did, before Jerusalem had been surrounded by enemies, and before the temple had been destroyed, the actual background at the time Hebrews was written was that of Herod's temple which took 60 years to build. The writer's references, however, were not to that temple; and neither were they to Solomon's temple, the full description of which is found in the Old Testament. There is no doubt, you see, that the tabernacle was the true pattern received from God and that the temple was an accommodation to human weakness, just as the levitical priesthood and granting the people's wish for a king, like other nations, had been!

We look back to the tabernacle, therefore, in relation to how it was when the 12 tribes are seen encamped around this central place of worship to God. Between the people and the tabernacle were the outer courts, but to these outer courts the inspired writer made no reference, but centered his observation upon the tabernacle itself. He points out that there were two parts to it, the outer, known as the Holy Place, and the inner, known as the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place. In the outer place or Holy Place he draws our attention in Hebrews 9:2, to a candlestick, or lamp stand, the opposite of which was a table with the shewbread. This was as God said, "That thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." (Heb. 8:5.) Here the word pattern refers to the model of something already in existence. He says, in effect, therefore, that this tabernacle was a representation, in the material realm, of spiritual facts. Under that Mosaic dispensation, God was teaching through pictures.

In the Holy Place was the lamp stand or candlestick which was described in Exodus 25:31-40. On top of the main stem and each branch there was a lamp in which pure olive oil was kept constantly burning. This lamp stand typified Christ's church, not as a dwelling place like the tabernacle, but as



God's appointed means for perpetuating and dispensing the light of the gospel of Christ. But observe that the lamp stand served only to support and dispense the light. It was the oil that produced the light, and throughout the Bible, oil is used as the appropriate symbol of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the seven lamps of the lamp stand seem to be symbolic of the perfect light of Christ's gospel. The Holy Spirit anoints who so ever will with the oil of God's word. "Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9.)

The table with the shewbread is described in Leviticus 24:5-9. This shewbread was eaten by the priests, and it was symbolic of the spiritual food of Christians, all of whom are made priests to God through Christ (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). And the frankincense described as being with the shewbread, in Leviticus 24:7, seems to have been emblematic of praise and thanksgiving. This table of shewbread, therefore, was symbolizing man's fellowship with God.

And before the veil was found the altar of incense. As Hebrews 9:6 reveals, "The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God." Every Sabbath the shewbread was eaten by the priests and new loaves placed on the table. Also, incense was offered on the altar of incense morning and evening, every day. The incense symbolized the worship and the adoration of the people of God. There were senses in which the altar of incense belonged to the Most Holy Place, but it was the last thing outside the veil. Actually, behind the veil, in the Most Holy Place, there was nothing but the golden censer and the ark of the covenant. The golden censer was used by the high priest to burn incense on, once a year, in the Most Holy Place. "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat." (Lev. 16:12-13.) The ark of the covenant, which was a chest of acacia wood, was covered by what is described as a mercy seat, and this was

overshadowed by two cherubim, the highest symbolism of created life.

In this Holy of Holies, on the mercy seat, under the outstretched wings of the two cherubim, a **supernatural** light was shining, which was called the Shekinah, and was the symbol of the **very presence of God**. It was to this tabernacle that the inspired writer went for his illustration. Had he gone to Herod's temple, he would have found no ark of the covenant. But we have seen what was in the tabernacle, therefore, the whole picture is that of the nation of Israel surrounding a place of worship which was the very heart and center of its life. The place of its highest activity — worship in the very presence of God.

And as we look back at that old tabernacle, **none** is found within that Holy of Holies for 364 days in every year. The chosen people of God were camped outside, and were represented by priests who continually every day passed into the outer Holy Place, attending to the lamps, which symbolized the light of God's gospel (the oil of gladness) and attending to the shewbread, which every seventh day symbolized communion between the people and God.

Only once each year, on the day of atonement, one man entered the Most Holy Place. He passed in alone, carrying with him fire and incense and blood. First he took the blood that spoke of his own necessity for cleansing, and then also blood which represented the people's necessity for cleansing who were outside. At sunset he left the Most Holy Place, and there it remained in splendid and complete isolation for another 364 days.

We see, in this picture, the masses of God's chosen people outside as they are represented by this one man. And not one of all these people, including the high priest who had made the atonement, had a conscience that had been cleansed. All of this served to demonstrate that the way into heaven, the anti-type of the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle, was still a mystery, a matter that was not fully understood by anyone but God himself, while the tabernacle and temple worship was continued.

The need for the cleansing of the conscience had been emphasized, and the fact

that man can only enter the presence of God, and render acceptable worship to God (by some mystery of sacrifice which would

provide for cleansing of one's conscience) was also emphasized, but was still a great mystery.

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## Excerpts From *A Short History Of Jericho Church Of Christ, July 24, 1872 To July 24, 1982* By Bill Ijames

**William G. Ijames, Jr.,  
Mocksville, NC**

The following are excerpts from this history:

"This short history is written to commemorate the 110th anniversary of the founding of the Jericho Church of Christ, the oldest continuing congregation of the churches of Christ in North Carolina.

"The present Jericho community is located just outside Mocksville, North Carolina, to the southwest, three miles from the present town limits. . . .

"In 1871 and 1872 several events took place which led to the establishment of a congregation in the Jericho community. In 1871, George Washington (Wash) Neely, a native of Forsyth County who was a member of Muddy Creek Church of Christ (Disciples today) came to Davie County and after securing permission, preached at the Baxter Schoolhouse in what later became the Jericho community.

"Mr. Neely was possibly enticed to the community by a Miss Mary Atwater from Ohio (a member of a family of well-known Disciples there), who had come South first to Alabama to teach the Freedman and later to Davie County to teach at the Baxter Schoolhouse. Shortly after this time, George Washington Neely and Mary Atwater were married. . . .

"The work of George Washington Neely did not go unattended as the next summer, in 1872, William Lucius Butler, a native of Davie County, returned from school in Kentucky and began preaching at Baxter Schoolhouse in the Jericho Community. In the heat of midsummer the seed sown took root, and five souls put on Christ in baptism on July 24, 1872. They were baptized

by Mr. Butler in Hunting Creek, about a mile west from present Jericho. . . .

"Undoubtedly the most famous of the five was Marshall Clement Kurfees. He became one of the most influential members of the churches of Christ from 1875 until his death in 1931. At the time of his baptism, he had unsuccessfully tried to get religion at the 'mourner's bench.' Soon after, he heard G.W. Neely and Kurfees say: 'They may say what they please about Brother Neely, but one thing is certain; he is preaching what is in the Bible.' The next summer, at the age of sixteen, with the preaching of W.L. Butler, he was baptized. . . .

"These first members held worship services in the Baxter Schoolhouse for twelve years. Through their influence, teaching and protracted meetings held by evangelistic ministers, the membership grew. It is reported Jericho had a membership of 35 in 1877.

"William Lucius Butler continued preaching effectively for the next thirty-eight years. (Butler was born in Davie County, September 11, 1848, and went to Kentucky in 1868. In 1872, on a return trip to North Carolina after preaching, he baptized those at Jericho.) He did extensive mission work in North Carolina and with congregations such as Jericho and Pfafftown, Warners Chapel, Boyers, Muddy Creek in Forsyth County and Nebo in Yadkin County. Butler also preached in Tennessee and Kentucky. He died in 1910 at Morganfield, Kentucky. . . .

"Marshall Clement Kurfees was born near Mocksville, North Carolina, on January 31, 1856. . . . His monumental work entitled **Instrumental Music in the Worship** remains as the outstanding work

on this subject even in our day. His widely distributed tract 'Walking by Faith' and work as an editor of the **Gospel Advocate** for sixteen years, highlight his outstanding contributions to the brotherhood. For 45 years he was minister for the Campbell Street congregation (later Haldeman Avenue) in Louisville, Kentucky, serving from 1886 until the day of his death, Tuesday, February 17, 1931. . . .

"The first meeting house stood unchanged for around fifty years. It was a one-room structure consisting of six windows and two doors. There was a small pulpit and a stand for the Bible being used by the minister or the person conducting the service. It was heated by a woodburning stove near the front and lighted with kerosene lamps designed to hang on the wall with a bright metal reflector back of the globe. There was rarely a night service except during the summer season when protracted meetings were held. The furniture consisted of pews made of wide boards of forest pine, a communion table and a small cabinet made of solid forest pine boards. This cabinet was used for extra Bibles and song books. The exterior of the building was painted white but the interior was left in the natural wood.

"For many, many years, Misses Mary and Rachel Seamon, two maiden sisters who lived nearby, faithfully prepared the Lord's Supper. In appearance they were pleasingly old-fashioned, always wearing pretty bonnets on their heads and aprons tied around their waists. . . .

"Wilburn Stonestreet was known among all the churches of Christ in Piedmont, North Carolina, as an outstanding song leader. He was mostly self-taught and usually led singing at Jericho until his death in 1953. If the singers were not singing the song correctly, he would stop them and give a lesson on the spot.

"Lewis Forrest lived to the grand old age of 95. Mr. Forrest died February 15, 1980. At Jericho today, more people are related to him than to any other person. His children, grandchildren and great grandchildren include several preachers and elders beside countless church leaders. They include outstanding preachers such as Tony

Forrest and Roger Powell. Tony Forrest said when he was a teenager, 'that great man with the thatch of white hair asked me, 'Don't you think it is time you started thinking about your soul?' A few days later at a meeting, Tony Forrest came forward and he was followed by his friend, Roger Powell and others. . . .

"During the latter years of Marshall Kurfee's life, a young preacher came from Tennessee for several summers to Jericho. . . . He was Houston Biggerstaff. Frank Stroud (Sr.) writing in the *Davie Record* of July 9, 1930, stated that he was much impressed by this man and his preaching. He preached 'a forceful sermon on repentance.' Mr. Stroud stated he was a young man well versed in the Scriptures. Large crowds attended the two weeks of services. Eighteen were baptized that summer. . . .

"The first preacher we know of who preached at Jericho on any regular basis other than meetings was W.L. (Willis Leander) Reeves who came to North Carolina from Kentucky . . . while living in Forsyth County. . . . Starting around 1923 he went back and forth by train from Forsyth County. He arrived on Saturday afternoons and stayed with members who took him back and forth to the railway depot in Mocksville. He did regular preaching until 1929. . . . His four children include Eunice Elizabeth Bost of the Abilene congregation and Eula Lois Harper of the Warners Chapel congregation. His grandson, Mrs. Bost's son, L. John Bost, is a preacher and presently is preaching at Gaffney, South Carolina. Jericho helps support his work there. . . .

"Willard Conchin was the first full-time preacher at Jericho serving from September 2, 1949, until 1952. Mr. Conchin was very instrumental in developing teenage classes and leaders among the young men. . . . He is well known today in the brotherhood for his books for Sunday School classes.

"L. Roger Powell was born in the Center Community in Davie County on October 3, 1933. Roger grew up in a primarily Methodist family and joined the Methodist church at Center at age 15. In 1951, while a senior in high school, he started dating



Clara Sue Forrest, the daughter of Clarence and Sadie Forrest (the granddaughter of Lewis Forrest). . . . In August 1953, 'Suzie' and Roger were married . . . eventually attended all services at Jericho hearing preachers like Burrell Prince and C.W. Bradley in gospel meetings. In June 1954 Jack Wilhelm was in a meeting at Jericho and when Roger saw 'Suzie's' brother, Roy, and her cousin, Tony Forrest, respond to the invitation on the next stanza, he responded also. . . . He soon resumed his college work at David Lipscomb graduating in 1961. After graduation (except for three years, 1966-1969, at Broad Street in Statesville), Roger has preached full-time for the Waynesboro Church of Christ in Waynesboro, Virginia. Waynesboro has grown from a small mission congregation to one with an average attendance of over 200. . . ."

### Heritage of Jericho

"Those who have preceded us in the

work at Jericho have certainly furthered the cause of Christ in North Carolina. Numerous congregations have been helped and have men serving them as preachers, elders and deacons whose background roots extend to Jericho.

"Jericho has contributed liberally to foreign works in Ghana and especially to the Natal School of Preaching in South Africa. This school with Jack Mitchell as its head has received several special contributions in addition to regular monthly support for students. This work has grown from a church membership among the blacks in South Africa of 1000 members in 1971 to 9000 members in 1982.

"The congregation is very much involved in the World Bible School having worked with over 5000 students in over fifteen countries. Numerous baptisms have resulted. This year the congregation is supporting and working with the World's Fair Exhibit of the churches of Christ in Knoxville, Tennessee."

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## Ralph S. Church, 1901-1982

### Jim Coviello, Winston-Salem, NC

On May 15, 1982, Ralph S. Church passed away at age 81. He is survived by his wife, Irma, his daughter, Flora Ann, two brothers and two sisters. A graveside funeral service was conducted by this writer on May 17 at Forsyth Memorial Park, Winston-Salem, N.C.

In the early 1900's the church in Winston-Salem was a small group meeting in an unpretentious building on Goldfloss Street. During that time, John W. Kurfees, brother of the famous M.C. Kurfees, moved his family from Germanton to Winston-Salem. He became one of the preachers for the Goldfloss congregation. During this time, brother Church met Irma Kurfees, John's daughter. They were married in 1925. Due to the influence of Irma and the Kurfees', Ralph became a member of the Lord's church, converting from Methodism. The Kurfees were very devoted to the authority of the Bible. They were evidently a powerful influence on brother Church's attitude toward the truth. He was well known for his great love for the truth and for his

defense of the gospel against every false way.

Those who remember the early years at Goldfloss street recall brother Church and John Kurfees as having done much toward the advancement of that little congregation. As the church grew, a new meeting place was sought. Brother Church is well remembered for being the one who found the land on South Main Street which became the site of the new building. He was also heavily involved in the details surrounding the purchase of this land.

When the South Main congregation ordained elders for the first time, brother Church was chosen along with five other men. During the years he served as an elder, the church grew. Brother Church helped bring several well-known preachers to Winston-Salem for gospel meetings. These meetings were a great contribution toward the numerical growth of the church. One of the great preachers brother Church helped bring to Winston-Salem was Foy E. Wallace, Jr. A close friendship arose between Ralph and brother Wallace. In many ways

the two men were much alike in character.

When the South Main congregation outgrew its facilities, efforts were made to establish another congregation in the southwest portion of the city. Neil Lightfoot, preacher at South Main, spotted some land on Hawthorne Road and a decision was made to purchase it. Being an elder at the time, brother Church was involved in the purchase of this land which became the site of the South Fork church of Christ.

Over the years, Ralph held membership in several congregations in the Winston-Salem area. He was a faithful member of the South Fork congregation when he passed away.

Brother Church took an active interest in

the Lord's work. In addition to serving as an elder, he was an excellent song leader. He had the ability to talk easily with strangers, make friends, and influence people. He used this talent for the Lord in many ways including personal work and visitation.

Brother Church had a great love and appreciation for gospel preachers. He enjoyed sharing his goods with them to express his appreciation. He was known to give away good religious books to preachers. Preachers who visited his home often left with some small present such as a neck tie or some item from his pantry.

Brother Church was a remarkable person of uncommon character. He will be missed, but the fruits of his labor remain with us.

## 1982 North Carolina Lectures

### Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC

The fifth annual North Carolina Lectures are to be hosted September 7-10 by the Linville Forest church of Christ near Winston-Salem. The theme of this year's program, "The Christian and the Second Coming," will seek to give a truly Biblical perspective to a subject that is steeped in misunderstanding and error in the religious world today.

The 1982 Lectures will have a distinctively North Carolina flavor this year. Every speaker will come from within the state, reflecting the view of the lectureship committee that we possess a wealth of talent and ability within our own borders. Sessions will begin each day at 10:00 a.m. and continue until 4:00 p.m. The evening sessions will feature an outstanding North Carolina speaker and plenty of good singing, which will be led by David Wheeler of the Providence Road church in Charlotte.

The lectureship committee, composed of Winston-Salem area preachers, has planned a program that will attempt to draw a balance between the exposing of error and the application of practical truths. In view of the gross errors that are being propagated in the religious world at large in regard to the second coming of Christ, it is necessary that our members be armed with the truth concerning Christ's return. Yet in our responsibility to expose error we often

overlook the positive practical admonitions of our hope in the Son's return. Many of the lectures will be devoted to helping Christians to better appreciate sometimes overlooked truths relating to the second coming of the Lord.

Make your plans now to attend the 1982 North Carolina Lectures. In many ways it promises to be one of the most distinctive and stimulating lectureship programs ever conducted in the state as our hope in the return of Jesus Christ will be forcefully and truthfully proclaimed. For more information concerning further details and housing, contact Bill Dorriety or the Linville Forest elders. The address is 450 Linville Road, Kernersville, NC 27284, and the phone number is (919) 784-9562. Don't miss it!

*"Facts do not cease to exist just because they are ignored."*

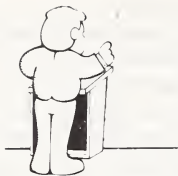
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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited by  
Johnny Melton



## Biographical Sketch



**Jim Coviello**

Jim Coviello is a native of Florida. He was raised on the east coast of Florida in Palm Beach County. In 1971 he obeyed the gospel, converting from Roman Catholicism. In 1973 he left his position as Produce Manager with a large Florida supermarket in order to become a gospel preacher. From the fall of that year until his graduation in 1975, he attended the Florida School of Preaching (Lakeland). While in school, he began part-

time work with the church in Dade City, Florida. After his graduation, he began his first full-time work with that congregation. It was there that he met and married Mary Ann Peden.

In 1976 the Coviello's moved to Tarpon Springs, Florida, where Jim began work with the Lake Tarpon church of Christ. In 1980 they moved to their present location in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Jim is working with the South Fork congregation.

While in Florida, brother Coviello worked three and one half years in the prison ministry. He is the author of a tract, **Why I Left the Roman Catholic Church** and an outline study of the eldership.

## Sermon

# Not Ashamed Of The Gospel

Romans 1: 14-17

**Jim Coviello, Winston-Salem, NC**

The gospel of Christ is the greatest message anyone can hear. It is the good news about the life, ministry, sacrifice, work, and doctrine of Christ. We ought to love it above all things. The proper attitude one should have toward the gospel is seen in our text. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. When we look at the facts concerning it, we can see why: (1) It is the greatest power — the power of God. (2) It deals with man's greatest need — salvation from sin. (3) It includes the greatest group — everyone that believes regardless of nationality or race. (4) It reveals the greatest blessing — the righteousness of God (justification from sin). (5) It operates on the greatest basis — living obedient faith.

No wonder Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. No Christian should ever be ashamed of it.

I. Not Ashamed in Believing It

A. When people believe in error, they become ashamed when they learn better. Error will disappoint us.

B. We may believe in persons but they can let us down. We are thereby put to shame.

C. But the gospel never puts us to shame. It is unchanging truth from a faithful and unchanging God (Rom. 9:33; 10:11).

D. On the day of judgment the faithful Christian will not be put to shame, for he will be saved by that which he has believed.

II. Not Ashamed of Its Afflictions and Reproaches

A. The gospel will cause reproaches and persecutions (Luke 6:22).

B. The afflictions of the gospel should not cause us to become ashamed. We can partake of them by the power of God (2 Tim. 1:8, 12).

C. Yet when persecution comes, many become ashamed of God, the Bible, the church.



### III. Not Ashamed of Speaking It

A. How tragic to allow ourselves to become intimidated by worldly philosophy so that we feel ashamed to mention the power of God unto salvation!

B. We can be ready to preach the gospel only if we are completely unashamed of it (Rom. 1:15).

C. Note Jesus' warning (Mark 8:38).

### IV. Not Ashamed of Defending It (Phil. 1:17).

A. Set for the defense (apologia) of the gospel. (1) Apologia also used in 1 Peter 3:15 (give an answer). (2) All Christians are to defend the gospel.

B. There was a time when brethren were more eager to defend the truth both public-

ly and privately. Now, many are ashamed to do so. The church has suffered because of this.

### V. Not Ashamed of Obeying It

A. Have you obeyed the gospel? Have you been afraid to do so?

B. Some are ashamed to admit they are wrong.

C. Some are ashamed of the demands of repentance.

D. Some are ashamed of the loss of friends, positions, etc.

E. Yet, nothing can be more shameful than hearing Jesus say, "Depart from Me." Now He says, "Come unto Me." Do not be ashamed of this invitation nor your obedience to it.

## A Valiant Soldier Dies

### Oscar Craft, Duncan, SC

On Wednesday evening, June 30, 1982, Bro. Glenn Moreland, a valiant soldier of the Cross of Christ, passed from this life. Bro. Moreland was a member of the Edgewood congregation in Greenville at the time of his death. With the passing of Bro. Glenn, an era in the work of the Lord's Kingdom comes to an end in this area. Bro. Glenn has done much work with various congregations in the up-state part of South Carolina. He served the Duncan congregation as her minister for approximately 15 years. In fact, he was the first full-time minister for Duncan.

Throughout the years, Bro. Moreland gave much of himself, his time and money to help the small struggling congregations. As for pay from a material standpoint, Bro. Glenn received very little for his work. He was laying up treasures in heaven and he has been called home to receive the greatest reward available to man. Truly, Bro. Glenn could say with the apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8.)

There is one charge that Bro. Moreland

has given this writer on several occasions and I am sure he would say it as emphatically today if he could to all men, "Preach the word and stay true to it, even when others do not." Bro. Glenn was truly a man of faith and he will surely be missed by all who knew him. But we can rejoice in that he has gone home to be with his Saviour.

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# The Great Disturber

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

“And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.” (Luke 23:5.)

No gathering in which Jesus spoke remained comfortable, and those who loved ease and pleasant things considered Him a troublemaker. His disciples were accused of turning the world upside down, and Paul had serious trouble in some of the churches which he established. It should be observed that neither Christ nor His disciples ever caused trouble simply for the thrill of it, or even to have their own way. It was their devotion to the truth which brought about the disturbing conditions. Truth and error are diametrically opposed, and no person can be loyal to the truth while winking at or compromising with error. But what was there about Jesus that disturbed people?

1. The quality of His life made sinners uncomfortable. Like the brilliance of the sun showing up the dirt on the window-pane, the transcendent life of Christ revealed the imperfections of men (Luke 5:8). Wherever Jesus went He shocked people with the radiant beauty of His spirit; and men, even of rank and influence, were disquieted by Him. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin but after a memorable night with Jesus, he was later found with courage enough to defend the common rights of Christ in the face of overwhelming odds. After Jesus was crucified, it was Nicodemus along with Joseph of Arimathea, who gave Jesus a respectable burial. The rich young ruler was a complacent young man, but when Jesus challenged him to a daring venture “he went away sorrowful.” Zaccheus was a tax collector who was apparently content with his ill-gotten gains, but after a visit with the Lord he found himself in trouble. He found it necessary to make some drastic readjustments in his own life, which he did by announcing his intention to give half his goods to feed the poor, and to reimburse fourfold any from whom he had wrongfully

exacted. Paul was a Pharisee and delighted in hunting down Christians to persecute them. When the Lord appeared to him in a blinding light, Paul immediately recognized his need to turn from his present ways and to follow Christ.

2. Jesus disturbed people with His ideas. “Thoughts that breathe and words that burn” always characterized Jesus. He did not hesitate to call in question and criticize the most revered practices and institutions of His day. When people heard Him, they were astonished at His teaching for He taught them as one having authority. Jesus spoke words that set men on their feet — powerful and revolutionary words; and it is no wonder that the common people heard Him gladly.

3. Jesus disturbed people with His ethical considerations. He knew the ineffectiveness of a fleeting piety, and He did not hesitate to condemn all showy acts of devotion (Matt. 6:1). With Jesus it was deeds, not words, that determined the real value of a man’s religion (Matt. 7:21). Jesus uttered some very strange things so far as the world was concerned, when He forbade all acts of retaliation and taught men to love their enemies. Someone has said that religion is to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.

4. Jesus disturbed people by His attitude toward the cross. People then, as they are now, were seeking for a life of ease, but Jesus offered them a cross (Luke 9:23). Jesus never admitted anyone into His fellowship without first informing him of the cost of discipleship (Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 9:57-62). Anyone is sorely mistaken if he thinks that he can have the good life which leads to heaven on his own terms. There are no shortcuts to God, and it ever remains true that “the way of the cross leads home.” (Matt. 11:25-30; John 6:44-45; Rom. 1:16; Acts 2:42).

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*“Stopping at third base adds no more to the score than striking out.”*

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# Assembly Required

**Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN.**

If you are like me, you have, at one time or another, purchased an item that had the words "assembly required" on the outside of the package. Those words mean what they say. Unless you have had previous experience at putting together a similar product, your first step is to sit down with the instructions. That is why the instructions are included. Perhaps you have come home with a product that is missing its assembly instructions. What do you do? You can start in blindly and hope for the best, never knowing if you might not just end up with the worst. Or you can go back and get a set of instructions. This seems fairly obvious.

But when it comes to assembling a Christian life, a lot of people seem to think they can do just fine without the instructions. God has made us. He knows what makes us work the best. He has given us the rule book for Christian living. We can not afford to leave that book on the shelf. If we want our lives to turn out the way God has planned, we need to follow the instructions. And if you see someone without a set of rules, why not share what God has said with that person? Remember the words of Paul to Timothy, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for **instruction** which is in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16.)



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

### **World's Fair Exhibit Is Successful**

**Knoxville, Tenn.** According to a recent newsletter from John Brown, an elder of the Laurel church which is sponsoring the world's fair exhibit in Knoxville, the first month's operation of the exhibit is surpassing expectations. The following information was given in the letter: "400,000 pieces of literature have been distributed. More than 4,400 have enrolled in Bible correspondence courses. Almost 17,000 people have either signed the guest register or completed cards requesting more information or help."

In another report Brown indicated that in addition to those enrolled in the correspondence courses, 85 requested a personal visit from a local Christian. At last report there was no definite information concerning the number of baptisms resulting from the exhibit, but it is known that at least one baptism has resulted.

### **New Film Strip Series**

**Texas.** In 1965, at the urging of the late Paul Settles, Jule Miller, producer of the popular "Visualized Bible Study Series,"

produced a film strip with black models. But only now have cassettes been made available with narrations by a black brother. Jack Evans, President of Southwestern Christian College and well-known black evangelist, has just completed recording "The Visualized Bible Study Series" on cassettes. The original production of the film strip using black models was made in response to pleas by black preachers and the current project was also undertaken at the urging of several black preachers. Perhaps in the future we will see other projects like this undertaken to help meet the need to evangelize minority groups.

### **Harding Schedules 59th Annual Lectureship**

**Searcy, Ark.** Harding University has scheduled its 59th annual lectureship for October 13-16. The theme of the 1982 program is "The Church: Renewal or Ruin" and will feature 32 day and evening lectures. According to Neale Pryor, Lectureship director, this year's theme was chosen to sound an optimistic note to those who feel that the church today is on the



decline.

Further information about the Lecture-ship can be obtained from Neale Pryor,

Lectureship Director, Box 767, Harding University, Searcy, Ark. 72143.



# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29731-6988. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Salisbury.** The West Innes church recently paid off the final land note on their property.

**Elizabethtown.** C.R. Franks is moving to Falfurrias, Texas. Their new address will be P.O. Box 732, 78355. Brother Franks has long been involved in the Carolinas, having worked in Greensboro, Asheville, West Columbia, and other places. He has been very active in camp work in both states. We pray God's blessings upon the Franks as they go to a new work.

**Raleigh.** The N.C. Evangelism Seminar is scheduled for September 3-5.

**Statesville.** The Northview church con-

tinues to ship pill bottles and other supplies to medical missionaries in United Republic of Cameroon. They will be glad to share information on this work with other congregations.

### N.C. Baptisms

Wilkesboro, 2; Fayetteville, 3; Highland Acres, Statesville, 2; Providence Road, Charlotte, 5; Asheboro, 1; Raleigh, 1; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 2; Elizabeth City, 1; Gastonia, 1; Mooresville, 1; Jacksonville, 4; Westside, Charlotte, 6. Total: 29.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Spartanburg.** Lightning caused a fire at the Fairview building on July 4 doing considerable damage. The estimate of repair costs is about \$50,000. Most of this was covered by insurance and the repair work is

**Publication Out: A Short History of Jericho Church of Christ, July 24, 1872 to July 24, 1982,** the oldest continuing congregation of the churches of Christ in North Carolina. Cost \$1.00, plus \$1.00 for shipping. Author available for lectures on the Restoration Movement, especially concerning North Carolina or for part-time preaching within 50 miles of Mocksville. Write Bill Ijames, P.O. Box 884, Mocksville, NC 27028.

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## CROSSROADS ISSUE

The most popular and far-reaching issue we have ever run of **Carolina Christian** was the June 1981 number on Crossroadsism. Hundreds of request for additional copies have been received from all over the nation. The articles have now been reprinted (not the whole issue) and are available for distribution. 20¢ per copy (plus postage), \$15 per hundred.

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## Free Lodging for World's Fair Visitors

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underway.

**Myrtle Beach.** The Buford Carrolls have moved to a new home at 110 Quail Hollow Road. Their new telephone is 293-4870.

**Charleston.** The Sid Fulfords have moved from Essex Village to Evansville, Indiana. Their address is: 324 Camden Court, 47715.

**Williston.** Randy Smith, a recent graduate of East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, is the new preacher.

**Bennettsville.** Eddie Helms has moved from Archdale in Charlotte, N.C., to preach for the church in Bennettsville.

**Greenville.** Glenn Moreland died on June 30 at age 76. For 58 years he was a faithful member of the Lord's church. Funeral services were conducted at the Edgewood building on July 3. Ernest Thigpen and G.F. Gibbs spoke. It was under brother Gibb's preaching that Glenn Moreland was converted at age 18. The following comments are from the Northeast and the Duncan bulletins.

"On Wednesday evening, June 30, 1982, brother Glenn Moreland, a valiant soldier of the Cross of Christ, passed from this life. Bro. Moreland was a member of the Edgewood congregation in Greenville at the time of his death. With the passing of brother Glenn, an era in the work of the Lord's kingdom comes to an end in this area. Brother Glenn has done much work with various congregations in the up-state part of South Carolina. He served the Duncan congregation as her minister for approximately 15 years. In fact, he was the first full-time minister for Duncan.

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"There is one charge that brother Moreland has given this writer on several occasions and I am sure he would say it as emphatically today if he could to all men, 'preach the Word and stay true to it, even when others do not.' Brother Glenn was

truly a man of faith and he will surely be missed by all who knew him. But we can rejoice in that he has gone home to be with his Saviour.

"Few, if any, would disagree that brother Moreland was probably the most beloved Christian in the greater Greenville brotherhood of the churches of Christ. He was humble, soft-spoken, gentle and instantly ready to preach the gospel of our Lord or render any other Christian service.

"Although he worked as a driver-salesman for a commercial laundry for his living until later years of his life, he began preaching soon after he became a Christian, serving regularly in congregations in Duncan, Spartanburg, Moore, and Greenville, and on special occasions in other pulpits of the churches of Christ in greater Greenville until failing health interrupted that activity also several months ago. Truly a great soldier of the cross has gone to his just reward to rise again in eternity."

### S.C. Baptisms

St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 1; Northeast, Greenville, 5; Myrtle Beach, 4; Essex Village, Charleston, 3; North Charleston, 1; Duncan, 1; Central, Spartanburg, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 1; Newberry, 1; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 3. Total: 21.

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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 9, SEPTEMBER 1982



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Northeast, Taylors, S.C.  
(See Page 6)

# editorial

## A GROWLERY

There are some things that we seem to have become experts in, one of which is quarrelling among ourselves. While we have not cornered the market on it, we seem to have surpassed our religious neighbors in the art. Good men and leaders in the church have sought a solution to this problem since apostolic times, but with little or no success. It seems to us that there is more of it now, especially in the Carolinas, than at any time in our 32 years of preaching the ancient gospel and trying to build churches into influential institutions. But all may not be utterly hopeless, providing we are willing to apply a simple solution.

Charles Dickens, in **Bleak House**, has Jarndyce, one of his characters, say to another one, Esther Summers, "Sit down, my dear. This, you must know, is the growlery. When I am out of humour, I come and growl here."

Having had some personal experience with growling and seeing its utter uselessness for any constructive purpose, to have a growlery struck us as being a brilliant idea. We immediately concluded, upon seeing Dickens' statement, that everyone should have a growlery of his own. Such a place would always be helpful when we get out of humor, but especially in the following situations:

### In the Home

The happiness and serenity of many a home has been destroyed by growling and quarrelling among the members who make it up, most of which is pointless and useless, as well as making life miserable for those around us. The kind of quarrelling that characterizes many homes led Solomon to observe, "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house." And again, "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman." (Prov. 21:9, 19.) Growling is an unprofitable business, doing no one any good. It should therefore be kept as private as possible.

But in the home we growl at each other for the most trifling causes, usually using it as an outlet to vent our frustrations. We thus growl at each other, not because of the weaknesses and failures of the other, but because of our own problems and discontents. We get angry, disgusted, and out of sorts with ourselves and then growl at the other members of the family. This is like kicking the cat because the dog bites. But that is the way we are, or at least a good deal of the time. And for this reason it seems to us that a private growlery, often used, might remedy the problem . . . and save many marriages. At the very least, it would prevent growling at another for the wrong reasons.

### In the Church

The very nature of the church suggests that here is one place everyone ought to be able to live free of growling and contention. But not so. Even the church in apostolic times had its growlers (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1-4; 14:33; James 3:14-18). It would be too much to think that we could escape them entirely.

There has never been a church, and probably will never be one, that has not had problems (some say they do not have them

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Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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but they call them by another name and a church problem by any other name is a church problem still). And this will continue to be the case as long as churches are composed of a human element. At least five of the seven churches addressed by the Lord in Revelation 2 and 3 were overloaded with problems. Paul dealt with at least a dozen problems in his first letter to the Corinthians. Problems *per se* are not the thing that should concern us; how we handle them is.

When a church has problems it can deal with them in one of two ways: (1) Face the issues, grapple with the difficulties, get to the root of the problems, and apply Scriptural solutions. This is the way all peaceful churches handle them. And they usually handle them so peacefully that they rarely recognize them as problems. (2) Permit the growling Christians (and nearly all churches have them) to go through the whole congregation doing nothing but growling about the problems until their growling causes frustration, confusion, and division. But rather than solving the problems, this only adds another one to them. To prevent this second method from being widely practiced, it seems to us that an excellent idea would be for each church to have its own growlery and when certain ones (whose one talent seems to be to growl) have to growl, they could be sent to the growlery and there growl in private (there would probably be enough growling for them to keep a constant vigilance at its shrine). If there is any place for growling in the church, surely it must be in such a growlery. And if such was used, and used often, it would certainly prevent a good deal of heartaches and disappointments in the Lord's work. It seems to us that with a growlery the growling Christians would be able to growl (in private) while the working Christians worked (in public).

### **In the Brotherhood**

There are, as unfortunate as it may be, brotherhood growlers, especially among editors, writers, and some preachers who do their growling in the pulpit, both at home and abroad. What a blessing it would be to the world, and to the church, if such

men could have a central growlery to which they could go from time to time to do their growling to one another or in private rather than doing it through papers and from the pulpit. Space in papers should be reserved for a positive presentation of truth and a sound logical refutation of error rather than growling at one another and venting our frustrations about brotherhood problems, which growlings and ventings cause far more problems than they solve. The pulpit should be reserved for the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. It is far too holy to use as a growlery or a place to express our vengeance on all those who differ with us in matters of judgment, expediency, and opinion.

Dickens had Esther say to Jarndyce, when he told her about his growlery, "You must be here very seldom, sir." "Oh, you don't know me!" he returned. "When I am deceived or disappointed in — the wind, and its easterly, I take refuge here. The growlery is the best-used room in the house. You are not aware of half my humours yet." Most of us feel that we need to occasionally growl at "the wind, and its easterly" (which is about as good as anything to growl at), but should we do it openly and publicly? Would not growling in private serve just as well?

The truth about the matter is that much of the recent problem of division in churches is caused by growlers who are discontent and unable to live in peace with their brothers in Christ. Thus the problem could easily be solved if the growlers would establish for themselves a private growlery in which to do their growling rather than growl at the brotherhood. Growling in public rarely does any good whatsoever; nothing would therefore be lost if it were all done in secret.

### **Conclusion**

The wise man had a word to say about public growling. He wrote, "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." (Prov. 29:11.) Perhaps **The Amplified Version** will make this plainer: "A [self-confident] fool utters all his anger, but a wise man keeps it back and stills it."



# The Foundation Of Faith (Part 3)

**Jim Gardner, Winston-Salem, NC**

Logically, a single miracle, performed in an undeniably supernatural fashion and supported by clear and sufficient testimony, would imply the divine mission of its author. If the winds and the waves obey a man's commands, or the dead come at his call, we can know that he has a vital link with God, for he has done what only God could have enabled him to do. Nevertheless, God wisely and graciously chose to demonstrate the authority of His son by a multitude of wonders, so that faith might be established "by many infallible proofs," and unbelief be left without excuse.

There are strong reasons why many people are reluctant to believe in miracles. By their very nature, miracles are exceptional and astonishing. Were our neighbor to report to us that a miracle had occurred, our first response would probably (and correctly) be one of doubt and disbelief, because a mature acquaintance with the world would have convinced us that liars are more common than wonders. Assuming the honesty of the witness, we still could not safely conclude the truth of the testimony, for good men make mistakes almost as commonly as bad men tell lies. Even were we ourselves to witness a miracle, we might decide it more likely that we had somehow been tricked or deceived than that God had actually suspended the laws of the universe in our presence.

In addition to these rational objections to belief in miracles, faith must contend with less honorable resistance. Often, the mind rebels against miracles because the heart rebels against God; and when truth has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt, unreasonable doubts remain. Creatures endowed with free will cannot be perfectly protected against their own folly, but a loving God surely recognizes that sinners need more than a bare minimum of reasons to believe. The purpose of miracles is not merely to convince the mind, but to convict the heart.

It seems to have been God's design that these difficulties should have been over-

come and faith created by sheer weight of miracle added upon miracle added upon miracle. The life of Jesus was foretold by miracle, began in miracle, ended in miracle, and was restored by miracle. The praise of His father came audibly from heaven, and great leaders of the past were brought back to earth, so that His transcendent greatness might be unimpeachably witnessed. A more massive testimony to His divinity was given by the countless wonders He personally performed. Dozens of specific incidents are detailed in the New Testament; yet the writers confess that they have recorded only a small sample of His actions, and we still feel, at a distance of two thousand years, the overwhelming tide of wonder. "And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them." (Matt. 4:24-25.) "Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them." (Luke 4:40.) "And great multitudes came unto him having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: In-somuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel." (Matt. 15:30-31.) "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25.)

In the light of this testimony, not the slightest possibility exists that the followers of Jesus somehow misunderstood normal actions and inflated them into miracles, or that Jesus intentionally perpetrated thousands upon thousands of successful frauds. Unless the gospel writers simply lied, a unique man lived a unique life, filled with

power and wonder. Isolated incidents that defy explanation excite a rational person's curiosity, but they do not drive him to take refuge in superstition, for he knows the limits of his own understanding, and that

there will always be inexplicable facets of experience. But the consistent pattern of miracles that surrounds Jesus of Nazareth demands a more positive response than cultured skepticism. It demands faith.

## South Carolina Lectures

### Fred Turner, Columbia, SC

It is with great delight that we are able to host the 17th Annual South Carolina Lectures at Ames Road. The Lectureship will be held November 8th through the 10th. We are very excited about the lectureship and great preparation has been made in the selection of the theme and the selection of outstanding preachers in the South Caro-

lina area. We anticipate some great preaching and wonderful singing during our three days together.

We will be developing on the theme "Going Back to the Old Paths." We hope you will join us in this great fellowship of God's word and fellow Christians throughout our South Carolina brotherhood.

The address of the building is: 5889 Ames Road, Columbia, SC.

## A Real Mission Field

### Ron Newberry, Greensboro, NC

"You're going to a real mission field." That was the usual response of Christian friends upon hearing that we were relocating to Greensboro, North Carolina. While true, this realization seemed to miss the real point of evangelism.

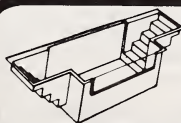
Having been born in St. Louis, Missouri, reared in rural western Kentucky, having lived two years in Memphis, Tennessee, while attending Harding University Graduate School, and living almost five years in Jacksonville, Florida, I discovered one thing; everywhere I have ever lived has been a mission field.

Why is it that a "mission field" in the minds of so many Christians always exists somewhere else? To raise the question to a conscious level almost provides the answer. Evangelism to many Christians is always done by someone else somewhere else. To refer to "someplace else" as a mission field tends to absolve us of any real involvement where we are planted. It implies that we believe our "field" has already been "missionized."

It is my conviction that we can take this

world for the Lord any time we get ready. The key is we must get ready. Until we have such a hatred for sin and a love for the lost that we will prepare ourselves, our part of the world will die lost. Until we see our community, our city, our state as a mission field this world will never be reached with the good news of Jesus Christ.

It is great to be in North Carolina. Yes, it is a mission field here. This disciple has accepted the challenge of changing this part of the world for the better. Let us join together and commit to unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. Let us boldly go forth to meet the challenge of reaching our part of a worldwide mission field. Let us begin where we are right now to take our part of the world for the Lord.



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# Northeast Church Of Christ

## Bill Goodpasture, Greenville, SC

May 30 was a special day in the life of the Northeast Church of Christ in Taylors, SC. On this day the congregation's new building was officially dedicated. This building was the fruit of 22 years of faithful and dedicated service of at least a few of those who have been there throughout the years of the congregation's existence. Begun in 1960 in the U.C.T. Hall, later merged with the Poinsett congregation, the church now seems at its highest level of growth and spirituality.

The Open House on May 30 began at the morning worship when 386 were present. The members of the church did an excellent job in bringing their friends and neighbors as many non-Christians were present. In the afternoon at the dedication service 439 were present and it was made up of an almost entirely new audience of neighbors and friends.

With the help of T.C. Hooper, longtime Greenville businessman and Northeast member, several of the community officials were present. Mayor Helms, Greenville County Sheriff Johnny Mack Brown, Lt. Melton of the City Police and David Wilkins, state legislator, were present and spoke briefly. Letters were received from Senator Strom Thurmond, Senator Ernest Hollings, Congressman Carroll Campbell, Governor Dick Riley and a special letter from the White House was read. The pur-

pose of having these officials was to make the community more acquainted with the churches of Christ and to let them know that we want to be of service to the community. To make this a reality the building was used recently as a polling place in the Democratic Primary.

The dedication service included the participation of the three elders Bobby Baker, Don Buck, and Ken Durham and songleader Warren Martin in leading the congregation in worship. Bill Goodpasture spoke on the theme "God Bless America" while David Wheeler of Providence Road church in Charlotte, NC, spoke on "What Meaneth These Stones." Ed Meixner, the oldest member of the congregation, led in a closing prayer. All visitors were then led on tours of the new facility by the teenagers of the Northeast church.

The new building at Northeast was several years in the planning and is very practical as well as esthetically attractive. It includes an auditorium that seats 425 and is expandable to about 800, 15 classrooms now in use that can be expanded to 19 classrooms if necessary. A large benevolence room that is stocked with clothing, food and furniture is available for distribution in the community. A fellowship room that can seat about 300 along with kitchen facilities is also a part of the ground floor.

Although all of the above speaks primarily of our pride in a new facility, the congregation has consistently reminded one another that we are to be more concerned with souls than buildings. The theme of Open House and our favorite song is "To God Be the Glory" for it is by His help that we have achieved anything. This year has seen the baptism of 17 precious souls. Since last August (1981) the attendance has increased from an average of 155 to a present attendance of 210. Sunday and Wednesday night attendance has increased considerably as well. Plans for the future include beginning ministries to the elderly and to single adults in our community. We believe the future is bright and that God will continue to bless our efforts as long as we stay close to the Book.

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# What A Difference You Make In My Life

David Vaughn, Burlington, NC

Ronnie Milsap's recorded the song "What a Difference You Make in My Life" that went to the top of the music charts. This song says love can make a real difference in life. Of course, we realize that many things can indeed make a difference in our lives. A new job, marriage, children; all make a difference. With such changes comes adjustments. Some individuals are haunted by change, but the person who cannot adapt to change can never really adjust to life and relationships that are a part of living.

No single thing or individual can make as much difference in our lives as Jesus the Christ. Oh, what a difference He does make! And this is a change we do not have to fear. We should fear if a change is not manifested! What are some of the differences Jesus makes in our lives?

1. The difference between the living and the dead (Eph. 2:1). "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23.) Thus, sin separates man from God, not only in this life (Isa. 59:1-2), but also in eternity (Luke 16:22-31). God has revealed that we can be alive physically, but by serving sin, be dead spiritually. Some individuals at Colosse had been dead spiritually but in yielding their lives to the teaching of the gospel of Christ they were made alive (Col. 2:13). Jesus said some individuals at Sardis claimed to be alive spiritually, but they were dead (Rev. 2:1).

Is there any application for us? Jesus is still the difference between life and death. The apostles preached that salvation could not be found in any name other than Jesus (Acts 4:12). Through nature God causes an ugly caterpillar to become a beautiful butterfly. Through Jesus we are changed from the dead to the living. Thanks be to God there is "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). To become alive spiritually brings new relationships — another difference Jesus makes.

2. Through Jesus we become children of God. "When the fulness of time came, God

sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4-5). How blessed we are to have a Creator who has created us in His image and then adopts us as His children! John writes, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. . . ." (1 John 3:1.)

When we understand this love, the Father's love for all mankind will be told throughout the world. We as His children will in our daily activities and worship manifest our love and reverence for Him. There will be unity among brothers and sisters in Christ! Distorted attitudes and disgusting actions will fade away as we become more Christlike in our love for one another. We will be able to live with ourselves and God's family as He intended! In this living family, relationships will not be based on opinions, positions or physical considerations, but on a Christlike spirit humbly seeking God's approval. In this family, where the Father's will is done, barriers are not erected but broken down, and "we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19.)

As God's children we will demonstrate care and concern toward all His children. If there is a "missing in action" family member, an all-out search is to be launched. Concerning the one overtaken by sin, God said, "Ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness." (Gal. 6:1.)

As His children we are heirs (Rom. 8:17). Our willingness to obey God's truth makes us His children and our continued faithfulness will make our inheritance an eternal reality. Through Christ we have been elevated from our spiritual poverty to receive, as His children all spiritual blessings. God will provide all our needs through Jesus (Phil. 4:19). Only in Christ can we have spiritual riches (2 Cor. 8:9). Only in Jesus do we have the promise of salvation

(2 Tim. 2:10). In comparison to what God has promised His children, what does the world have to offer? Neither money nor power can give us the assurance we have as children of God. Yes, Jesus certainly does make a difference!

3. Jesus also makes a difference as to the purpose of our lives. Our purpose is to be in keeping with the purpose of God. In understanding God's purpose for man, we know our purpose. The Holy Spirit guided Solomon to write, "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecc. 12:13.)

John wrote, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy

the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8.) God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9.) Our salvation depends upon our response to Christ, but man cannot respond to that which he does not know. God's eternal purpose is for His wisdom to be made known through the church (Eph. 3:8-12). So our purpose is not only to believe and be baptized (Mark 16:16), but to help accomplish God's purpose — teach the gospel to the whole world. In so doing the church will become mature (Eph. 4:11-16) and needs will be met (James 1:27).

Yes, what a difference Jesus will make in our lives, if we are willing to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Him.

---

## The Heart Of A Stranger

### Dan Williams, Roanoke Rapids, NC

When the Jewish people became a nation they were given an unusual number of commands concerning their treatment of strangers. They were not to wrong them (Ex. 22:21), nor oppress them (Lev. 19:33). Instead, they were admonished to love them (Deut. 10:19). And with each command came both a reason and a reminder: "You know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Ex. 23:9.) The sons of Joseph, above all people, would know what it was like to be in a place where they were unwelcome and unwanted. They had been strangers in the land of Egypt for so long they knew the "heart of a stranger," and thus were commanded to do their best to make their visitors feel

welcome.

Very often in our congregation we have a number of visitors for worship, especially on Sunday mornings. They come for a variety of reasons. Some are in town to visit relatives, and accompany them to church. Some are on vacation, and are just passing through. Some are from our area, and have been invited by friends. And some are there on their own initiative, investigating to see for themselves what the church is like. But whatever their reason for coming, all our visitors share two things in common: they are strangers in a place unfamiliar to them, and whether they feel welcome or not depends entirely on us.

Have you ever been in a strange place where you felt bewildered, out-of-place, conspicuous, or even unwelcome? Then have "the heart of a stranger" and look at the congregation through the eyes of someone new. Are visitors made to feel welcome, at ease? Does someone speak to them, invite them back, and show a genuine concern? It just might be the encouragement they need to cause them to return, and learn more of God's word.

After all, we have the example of Abraham, who was blessed for his concern for strangers (Gen. 18; see Heb. 13:2). Hear Jesus say, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in."

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# Why Don't Preachers Stay Longer?

**Larry Eppley, Rockingham, NC**

"... And so brothers and sisters, feeling that I have done about all that I can do here, I have decided to move to another field of labor."

And so it goes. The preacher has made a pretty farewell speech. Everyone's feelings have been spared. Good brother Jones is off to pack his books. Everything has been handled with the utmost of dignity and decorum. Just one thing has been overlooked. Nobody knows why the preacher is leaving.

## **A Case at Point**

Not quite eight years ago I submitted my resignation, gave my version of the pretty farewell speech, and prepared to leave. "We are not pulling in the same direction," I had explained to the church, comparing the problem to the Old Testament prohibition of yoking different animals together. "And I and the elders have all agreed that under the circumstances it would be better to part company." Agree indeed. I had been fired. And the circumstances were that I and my family would starve if I did not get out of town. One of the three elders had entered their meeting with the ultimatum that either I go or he would go.

It was just as well. The man had kept me in fear from the time I moved in until 10 or 11 months later when I left. But there were people there I loved. And the elder under consideration was undergoing a serious family crises. So I did my preacherly doublespeak routine and got out. A few Sundays later, this elder left for a lengthy vacation, and another elder had to stand before the congregation and justify their decision which they had made on behalf of the church. The third elder simply told the members, "You talk to the other two. This was their decision."

I write these things, not out of vengeance or as a way of exalting myself at the expense of others, but to make an important point. Preacher, elder, and member alike had better seek the answer to an important question: Why don't preachers stay longer?

## **The Three-Year Barrel**

For some preachers the answer is simple. They leave because they had never intended to stay beyond several years. With their three year's worth of sermons already worked up, they preach until the barrel runs dry, and they move on. For them, "I've done all I can do here" simply means, "I've run out of soap." And so they have.

This is most unfortunate. It makes it difficult for the next man to stay longer. It belittles the power of the pulpit. But most tragic, it forces a group of Christians to endure shallow sermon presentations.

## **The Two-Year Syndrome**

According to some recent surveys, we are moving our preachers every two years. Shades of denominationalism. Shades of old-fashioned Ketchersideism. What's the matter with us? Are we not free from the heavy-handed rule of religious hierarchy? We lay claim to no itinerant clergy supported by "the denomination." We boast of our congregational autonomy, and emphasize the sacredness of Scriptural elderships in every congregation. Then we create a class of "evangelistic floaters" who are never quite sure if it's safe to put both feet down in a place and really go to work.

I know that the apostle Paul was an itinerant or travelling evangelist. But have we totally overlooked his association with the Antioch (Syria) church (Acts 14:26-28)? Is it not just possible that as an apostle he had certain unique functions which resulted in his town-to-town evangelism throughout the Gentiles? And did not even the "quick on the move" apostle Paul become a located preacher for three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31)? Is not one of the best descriptions of the work of the located preacher Acts 20:7-38 where Paul speaks of his work in Ephesus? And just how could Paul's instructions to Timothy or Titus be carried out if the preacher's only function is to "hit and run," so to speak?

## **The Aesthetic Distance Concept**

I performed a wedding recently with the



assistance of a denominational clergyman and in that denomination's church building. He wore his robe, as is his custom when acting "officially" on behalf of his church. I, of course, wore only my three-piece blue "preaching suit." I represented me, my Lord, and the conviction I share with many that the New Testament knows no clergy-laity distinction. It spoke of dignity, officialdom, and exaltation. He was truly somebody in his denomination. I was sure that he had grown two or three inches since I had met with him in his study where he wore ordinary clothes.

Now what was I perceiving? Aesthetic distance. The sense of awe you experience as a child when you are told that you can look but not to touch. The very sense of awe that we preachers often try (or are even expected) to project about our role. And that very thing that would require me to be "Brother Eppey" instead of Larry. And the very thing that inhibits real relationships from developing between preacher and congregation. Just what good is it to speak respectfully of saintly Brother So-and-So, and to secretly wonder what the man is really like?

"You shall never wash my feet!" declared Peter to his soon-to-be crucified Lord. "If not," Jesus replied, "then you will have no part with me." (John 13:8.) Jesus believed in relationships. No aesthetic distance. When preacher and pew alike outgrow this unscriptural foolishness, preachers will stay longer.

### **The Bail-Out Option**

Then we come to another unfortunate fact. The reason that some preachers leave their pulpits is because they have left the pulpit, period. Rather than refer to this as the same sort of "burnout syndrome" which all professions share, I prefer to call this the "bail-out option." It does not occur, generally, because one is just tired of what he is doing. Quite to the contrary. The "bail-out option" is exercised because the "located preacher role" is inhibiting one's evangelism. What a paradox! To actually feel that as a dedicated Christian and daily student of Jesus' teachings, that you could be more effective without the incessant

carping of the brethren, the constant vulnerability of being out front, and the ever-present fear that you will be forced to inform your family that whatever bonds of friendship they have nurtured up to the present will be shattered. But doesn't the preacher know what the role requires before he assumes it? Perhaps or perhaps not. The point is that when satisfaction no longer exceeds sacrifice, one bails out while he can. To think differently is to be most naive.

### **The Hired Lackey Problem**

A well-known teacher of preachers has often confessed to his classes of would-be preachers that he personally got out of located preaching because he was sick and tired of some good sister creating a big problem because he did not come fast enough when she had an ingrown toenail. His statement obviously was an intended exaggeration. But it made his point. It's one thing to be sensitive to the needs of others in the congregation, and to be responsive to special needs. However, it's unfair to any preacher to tell him that is what he's paid for. We must get our heads on straight. The support which the preacher receives is not so much pay for so many hours work, or so many visits made, or even so many sermons preached. When a church agrees to financially support an evangelist, it is agreeing to participate financially in the type of service to which he is already committed. And if he is located with the supporting congregation, that is by prior agreement, and because he has chosen local work. I once heard a strange statement from an older preacher. "The preacher who will not serve God without pay will not do it with pay." Not so strange after all. Do not insult me by telling me that a particular task is what I'm being paid for. My Lord knows better. So do I. Congregations do not usually lose their preachers by default.

### **A Final Thought**

Much more could be said. Admittedly this article has been presented from a preacher's point of view. It will be left to the reader to determine the validity of the points made.

Sometimes a preacher is antagonistic and hurtful. Unwilling to grow unto the likeness of Christ. Or seeks to propagate doctrinal error. However, when the above is not the

case, and the preacher feels compelled to move anyway, there is an important question which must be asked: "Why don't preachers stay longer?"

# The City That Should Have Stood Forever

**Barry Fike, Charleston, SC**

"Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. 4:30.) Babylon is called by many the city that should have stood forever. Do you know why? Babylon's walls were 60 miles long, 300 feet high, and 80 feet thick. The city straddled the Euphrates River and was further protected by a moat and 250 manned towers. A total of 100 brass gates guarded the entrances to the city. And still it fell in one day. **One day!**

The account of its destruction runs like this. Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, was throwing a big party for a thousand of his lords in his palace (Dan. 5:1-4). They had gotten very drunk and were not paying much attention as to the events of the evening. While this party was going on, the Medes and Persians, who were outside the city, had finished draining the water off of the Euphrates river which left a dry riverbed directly into the center of the city. These armies quickly overcame brief resistance and came to the palace. The gates were closed but opened as soon as the palace guards opened them to see what the clamour was in the streets. The battle was over before it had even begun and so it was prophesied by Jeremiah that the city would be taken at one end (Jer. 51:31) and that they would be drunk (Jer. 51:39). The prophesy of Isaiah also came true; "... Babylon is fallen" (Isa. 21:1-9). Thus ended one of the most elaborate, sophisticated, scientifically enlightened civilizations of that time. It is indeed a good story but what has that got to do with the Christian of today?

This example just goes to show us that our faith does not need to center in this world or the things of this world. Hebrews 11 gives us many examples of men, and

women, who were faithful to the end of their physical life. People like Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses are all mentioned that they were led by faith that was not of this world. Why? Because "... they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. 11:16.)

It is so easy to be caught up in the quest for physical life and enjoyment. The mass media centers most of its air time to that single message. Yet the Bible tells us that we need to "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." (1 John 2:15-17.)

The city of Babylon is considered by archaeologists today to have been a great city of learning. And yet the Bible tells us that "... the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." (1 Cor. 3:19.) One can certainly see where the wisdom of Babylon led it. One can also see where the wisdom of the Bible can lead him. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:5.)

"This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue, the angels beckon me from heavens open door, and I can't feel at home in this world anymore." Amen.

# Obstacles To True Worship

Gayle Cooper, Barnwell, SC

The one thing I remember most vividly about my junior year in high school is attending a performance of Shakespeare's **Julius Caesar** — an underprivileged Alabama country girl's first live drama by real actors! Oh, the props and scenery, the make-up, the costumes, the actors! But more than anything else, my becoming an involved participant in the play was the thing that captivated me into what would become a lifelong love of true drama.

The opening scene enticed many in the audience to be caught up in the play. **Julius Caesar** opens with a mob scene — citizens running wildly to decorate statues, doorways, anything, in honor of Caesar. In this production, the crowd came from everywhere — front entrances, side alcoves, rear exits, and among the seats: suddenly, out of the lull just prior to curtain time, exuberant sound and movement of hundreds of people exploded! From that beginning, I was entranced and involved in the entire play. Much of the time I sat on the seat's edge, eagerly anticipating each word and movement on stage. I noticed that many around me were equally excited and involved.

However, some playgoers thought Portia's costume inappropriate. Caesar's wife's hair wasn't right, and Antony was too old. Brutus didn't use enough forcefulness. The play was too long, the ghost scene poorly staged, etc. Most of these super-critics would not even wait until the play was over — they made their carping remarks during key scenes, totally oblivious of common courtesy. Others began their remarks with their first breath as the curtain closed on each act.

Through the years I have remembered those unhappy playgoers and wondered why people would go to that play yet be unable to enjoy such a masterful production of a master's work. I believe I know now. In the first place, they did not love drama. Their being there served some other purpose — social, perhaps. Second, they spoiled their chance of enjoyment by being

critics rather than participants. Third, the playgoers must not have enjoyed being with others in the audience. Fourth, they may not have had any appreciation of the benefits to them which participating as a member of the audience offered.

How like the theater is the worship of the church! The "worship spectators" are either participants or critics, and being and feeling a part of the church and its worship are necessary for enjoyment and benefit. Some go to worship assemblies to participate. They love the Lord and are eager and thankful for all opportunities to worship Him along with other of His worshipers. They are actively part of the service and recognize that their part is to participate with other worshipers rather than be given a performance. They go away edified.

In contrast, some Christian worshipers are not worshipping at all! They face some obstacle to true worship. They are probably in the assembly for the wrong reasons, without enough love for God to prompt desire rather than duty. If one knows he has been bought by the blood of Christ and understands only a part of the unsearchable riches of Christ with which the Father has blessed him, surely his own love for God will cause him to desire the special communion of the church assembly.

Some Christians set up a blockade between themselves and true worship by harboring a critical outlook. They **cannot** worship because they are too bothered by what they see in the participants. These critics, like those of the theater, also comment, either during the services or in their first breath at the end of the closing prayer. A song was pitched too high. A word was mispronounced. A sister's hairstyle or a brother's clothing was not right. The Bible class teacher spent too much time on one point. The sermon was poorly illustrated, the prayer or sermon too long, etc. A critical outlook interferes with true worship.

Being a true participant in worship as-



semblies requires love and closeness with the spiritual family — the congregation of which we are a part. Most people know something of family love in an earthly family and have some experience with its power. When family love is strong, getting together can be uplifting and exciting. If Christians love one another as they should, according to John 13:34-35, we could approach each assembly with eagerness at the opportunity to be together. Our being together would then edify and uplift us.

Since our family moved to South Carolina, we live at least 450 miles from anyone in our earthly family. On most vacations to Mother's, we could hope to see only part of the family. But one trip was different. Mother, my three brothers and their wives and children, and we Coopers were all at one place at one time for the first time in nine years. The excitement of this event sparked like static electricity among us as we South Carolinians anticipated the trip. When we look forward to a gathering of God's people, we should experience that kind of eager anticipation. The closeness and love between members of God's family essentially go far beyond earthly ties. When we are to assemble, not only are we to be with our spiritual brothers and sisters, but in communion also with our heavenly Father, our elder Brother, and the Holy Spirit in a very special time apart from the world.

An understanding of some of the benefits of assembling in true worship will help one to be a participant in every worship service possible. I do not claim to know all the reasons why God wants us to assemble, but certainly the benefits are ours. After all, He asks nothing of us to fill His own need. Paul told the Athenians, "The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, **as though he needed anything**, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17:24-25.) What do we do in worship assemblies that does not strengthen us? We study God's word. For Him? Of course not. We give. Who profits more than we profit? Read Malachi 3:10: "Bring ye the

whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Read Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over. . . ." Besides, "God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7.) We remember Christ in His memorial supper. For Him? No, but to keep ourselves and others reminded of His death and His coming. We sing — admonishing and exhorting **one another** as well as praising God (Col. 3:16). WE do all these things in worship and praise to God and in fulfilling His command. But our doing them is not an end in itself, but the means to an end — part of which is **our** growth, **our** strengthening. We look forward to the family gathering — it gives us strength to keep trying to grow in a Christian walk. Knowing we can soon be with loved ones in Christ, to be edified and encouraged by them, keeps us going when our road is steep and filled with trials.

Oh, the joy in the heart of the Christian, how blessed (happy) is he who looks forward to gathering with God's family and participating in worship! To lift voices in praise together, to feed upon the word, to implore God's mercy and aid, to commune with the Godhead and with one another in the memorial breaking of bread, and freely to give of the abundance over which God has made us stewards — doing these together with the spirit and the understanding **so** blesses Christians! But oh, the emptiness of the heart that will not be lifted by the communion with God and His saints! Oh, what joy missed! Oh, such advantage not taken advantage of!

God demands true worship. Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24.)

Those who would be **true worshipers** must overcome the obstacles their own hearts put in the way. Be a true worshiper.

# Christ's Death And The New Covenant (Part 2)

Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC

The whole picture drawn by the writer of Hebrews is of the nation of Israel surrounding a place of worship, which was the very heart or center of its life, and the place of its highest activity — worship in the very presence of God! The need for the cleansing of the conscience had been emphasized and the fact that man can only enter the presence of God and render acceptable worship to Him by some mystery of sacrifice which would provide for cleansing — but was still a mystery!

Against that background let us look at Hebrews 9:22-24 step by step. Not all things are, by the law of Moses, purged with blood, but almost all things. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) Now "It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Heb. 9:23, ASV.) And then, comes the great declaration. "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us." (Heb. 9:24, ASV.) That **now** of verse 24 has **eternal value**, not a transient value. For the **true** place of worship is heaven. The inspired writer said that **the Son entered heaven itself**.

In Mark's account of His ascension, after Jesus had spoken unto the eleven, "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." (Mark 16:19.) Also, while Jesus blessed the eleven, "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." (Luke 24:15.) Again, "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11.) Therefore, even as the writer has said here in Hebrews 9:24, Christ has entered into heaven itself. I

repeat, **heaven is the true place of worship**, and if when we gather together in any place or building to worship God, through His Son, and we do not find our way into that spiritual region where Jesus is sitting on the right hand of God, our worship fails. The only true place of worship to God, through His dear Son, is heaven or "within the veil," where Jesus is sitting on the right hand of God. And when the Son entered into heaven itself, He entered to remain there. **Now to appear before the face of God for us (Heb. 9:24).**

And this is a direct contrast to the account we have in Exodus 33:18-23 when Moses desired to see God, and was told, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." And Moses was allowed only a look at the back of God. But now the Son has passed into heaven, the Hebrew writer reveals, to appear before the face of God for us on our behalf.

The ultimate in worship to God is made possible through the Son's offering of Himself, once for all, entering into heaven itself, before the face of God. Gathering up the values of the inspired teaching of the Hebrew letter, therefore, at this point we can see that the true place of the worship of man is certainly not an earthly building. Such buildings are but conveniences on the material level, built for the gathering together, or the assembling together of the saints. Assembling for worship to God through Jesus Christ, our high priest within the veil, in heaven itself. Our high priest who according to Hebrews 9:24, appears before the face of God — **for us**.

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:12.) Also, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9:15.) "For where a testament is there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."


(Heb. 9:16-17.)

The worship of the Old Testament tabernacle could not make men perfect. It was, as Hebrews 9:9 points out, a figure. The idea conveyed is that the Jewish tabernacle, with all its rites, was made a symbol of the good things of the new covenant kingdom of heaven, Christ's church. And as the apostle Paul reveals, the law of Moses, "Was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. 3:24.) Even so the symbolic worship of the tabernacle was designed to continue until the beginning of the new dispensation under the reign of Christ, but no longer. The law of Moses was, as Hebrews 9:10 reveals, "Imposed on them until the time of reformation." That time of reformation is the time of the last will and testament of Jesus Christ, which became of force after His death. The promise of eternal inheritance. The new covenant.

But now, **once** at the end of the age, at the end of the first covenant, Christ hath

appeared (Heb. 9:26, ASV). Continuing, it is revealed that we all have two appointments which we cannot cancel: "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgement; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation." (Heb. 9:27-28, ASV.)

Death is certain, and as physical death finds us, so shall judgment. Physical death and judgment are appointments we must keep, but if we are found in Christ we also may obtain the salvation which is in Him with eternal glory of which the inspired Paul spoke (2 Tim. 2:10). The worship that is made possible through God's Son certainly is superior, as is plainly pointed out to one and all: "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.)



## A Divine Discipline

**Michael Mobley, Mooresville, NC**

*Be you patient — but have enthusiasm.*

*Be you loving — but restrain it to a whole-some control.*

*Be you hopeful — but understand both sides of what lies before.*

*Be you faithful — but keep all faults and virtues in perspective.*

*Be you respectful — but never bow too low.*

*Be you sober — but forget not how to laugh.*

*Be you determined — but keep your mind keen to all that is around you.*

*Be you persistent — but act with organization and wisdom.*

*Be you yourself — but be secretive with discretion.*

*You will then be successful — but be watchful so not to loose it all!*

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# Rememberances

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

"And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, 'When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean these stones? They shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea which He dried up from before us, until we were gone over; that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty; that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever.' " (Joshua 4:19-24.)

There is in this vivid Old Testament narrative a sorry commentary on human frailty — our proneness to forget that which we ought to remember. How could the children of Israel ever forget their passing through the Jordan on dry land? But they did! How could their fathers forget their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, their passing through the Red Sea, or the love of their deliverer? But they did! How can enlightened people forget Jesus Christ, His coming to redeem sinful humanity, and His sacrifice upon the cross? But they do! Monuments, memorials, reminders, and celebrations — all have their place in the melancholy fact that we are a forgetful people. God has always encouraged the use of reminders, that is, the ones which He approved; and some of them may be described as magnificent reminders.

## Some National Reminders

Among the more familiar monuments, celebrations, and anniversaries in American life are Bunker Hill in Boston; the Liberty Bell, Philadelphia; Washington Monument, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Raising of the American Flag on Iwo

Jima in Washington; and the Fourth of July. All of these reminders have a story to tell which is dear to the heart of every American. While all such reminders have a common purpose — to help us to remember that which we ought not to forget — they do not all work in the same way. The marble shafts and sculptured likenesses bear silent testimony; the Liberty Bell is put into action; while the Fourth of July calls for fitting celebrations on the part of the people.

## Common Characteristics of All Memorials

They are always commemorative. Every school boy and girl is somewhat familiar with the histories of the memorials enumerated. Monuments and memorials always refer to people and events which those who erected them and those who observe them consider important. Monuments and memorials depend upon the people and the events which lie back of them for their meaning. They are *prima facie* evidence that the people and events they commemorate actually lived and transpired. They are as sacred to the hearts of those who erect and perpetuate them as are the people and events which they commemorate.

## Some God-given Reminders

**The Sabbath day.** The origin of this day is set forth in Genesis 2:1-3. Later on when God gave the law of Moses to Israel, He saw fit to make the sabbath day a magnificent reminder to them (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:15). **The Passover Feast.** (See Ex. 12:1.) This feast was in memory of the preservation of the first-born of the Israelites from the destroying angel and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. **Baptism.** This ordinance is a dramatic reminder of the three fundamental facts of the gospel (1 Cor. 14:1-4; Rom. 6:3-4). When baptism is administered with dignity and solemnity it is an impressive ceremony — beautiful, helpful, pictorial, and dramatic. **The Lord's Supper** (1 Cor. 11:23-26). This in-

stitution has been referred to as a love-drenched reminder that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should have life in His Son, and that more abundantly. The Lord's Supper is a magnificent reminder that God is; that Jesus died for our sins; that prayer is potent; that love is dynamic; and that faith is the victory! **The Lord's Day** (Rev. 1:10). This memorial is the weekly anniversary of the most stupendous event in history — the resurrection of Christ from the dead. To be in the Spirit on the Lord's day should mean that the other days of the week will be used wisely and helpfully, not only to ourselves, but also to our fellow pilgrims along the way.

## The Proper Regard for Our Reminders

The last three of the reminders enumerated are for people in our day and age, and every person who wants to honor Christ must be loyal to them. They were ordained by God and no one can please Him who does not give serious attention to that which He has commanded (Matt. 7:21; Luke 7:29-30; John 12:48-50). The least anyone can do, therefore, if he sincerely wants to pay homage to the memory of Jesus is to make an honest effort to observe these memorials which He has ordained, in the way in which He has commanded. That is within the reach of any person who is responsible to God.

# I Am He

## Geoffrey Sikes, Nashville, TN

Have you ever tried to reach someone on the telephone and been put on hold? Or have you ever been transferred from department to department before you ever got in touch with your party? If that has ever happened to you, you are usually pretty glad when the right party gets on the line. After all, that is the person you were waiting for.

I just received a call at the office. A lady was asking to speak to Geoffrey Sikes. I answered, "This is he." She then went on to accomplish the business which had prompted her call. The reason was because she had gotten in touch with the person she was looking for.

In the fourth chapter of John, we read the account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. She was engaged in a conversation with Jesus, and we read in verses 25 and 26, "The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.'"

Now what was this woman's reaction when Jesus told her that He was the Messiah she was speaking about? She went and told her friends and many people of the city believed. We have Jesus' same words today that He is the Messiah. Are we acting

on that information, or keeping it to ourselves? We have been put in touch with our party. Let us carry out our business.



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# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC

## Teens Take America

**Oklahoma City, Okla:** This past June 17-19, approximately 2,000 teenagers from across the country gathered at the Civic Center in Oklahoma City. The event was the fifth annual Teens Take America and was sponsored by the Quail Springs congregation. Twenty-one teenagers put on Christ in baptism during the event.

## Contribution for China

**East Detroit, Mich:** The Northeast church in East Detroit set aside June 6 as China Day to focus on the needs of evangelistic work in China. George Benson, former president of Harding University and a missionary to China before the communist revolution there, was the special guest speaker. He noted that doors are opening for evangelism for the first time in decades and that efforts to evangelize the Chinese people will require the help of Christians throughout the world. The special effort raised \$29,315.00 for evangelistic efforts in Communist China.

## Bradley to Harding Graduate School

**Memphis, Tenn:** C.W. Bradley will be teaching at Harding Graduate School beginning with the 1982-83 school year. Referred to as "an excellent role model for young ministers" by Harold Hazelip, dean of the school, brother Bradley will teach a course each fall entitled, "The Local Preacher." The emphasis will be on the practical aspects of preaching.

## Honduras Campaign Successful

**Tegucigalpa, Honduras:** A recent eight-day campaign to this Central American country produced 85 baptisms. The campaign was conducted from the National Theater Manuel Bonilla in Tegucigalpa. The attendance for the night sessions averaged well over 750. Every night between 60 and 100 non-Christians would go to the conference room of the hotel where the campaign workers were staying to study God's Word. During the three weeks immediately following the campaign, 14 others were baptized for a total of 99 thus far.

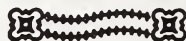
## Carolina Church News

### Union

JOHN D. WHITE, Reporting: Our most recent statistics are as follows. . . .

Since March 12, 1982, we've enjoyed 15 baptisms (2 of these coming in July). Since March 3, 1982, we've enjoyed about 20 restorations (some of which had been

disfellowshipped). Our attendance is running about 150-160 even during these summer months. Everyone's enthusiasm is growing and the Lord is being glorified in their lives.



Male, age 30, incarcerated and lonely; seeking to establish new associations through correspondence with older and fellow Christian servants of God. I will answer all letters. Charles H. Hunt, #136-074, P.O. Box 45699, Lucasville, Ohio 45699-0001.

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# A Look At Books

## Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

**The Case for Teaching Creation, A.J. Hoover,** College Press Publishing Co., Joplin, Mo., paper, 84 pages.

In this book, Dr. Hoover makes a reasoned and sane defense of the case for teaching creation in public schools. The greatest strength of the book lies in the author's ability to show that scientifically there are at least two possible explanations of the existence of life as we know it: creation and evolution. He argues that in such disciplines as history and psychology there are different interpretations and theories. These differences are often taught in classes such as "Theories of History" and "Theories of Personality." Dr. Hoover argues that the study of origins is of such a nature that it should be treated in a similar class, "Theories of Origins." He closes his book by quoting Clarence Darrow, the attorney who defended John T. Scopes in 1925 in the famous Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee. In the trial Darrow defended Scopes' right to teach evolution in a public school. Clarence Darrow said, "It is bigotry for public schools to teach only one theory of origins."

**Declaring God's Righteousness, John Waddey, J.C. Choate Publications,** Burton Drive, Winona, Miss. 38967, 247 pages, cloth, \$6.00.

This book is composed of articles previously published in brotherhood journals and short sermons. The material in "Avoiding the Ditches" is worth the price of the book. Brother Waddey writes: "There is a growing belligerency and hostility on the part of some brethren toward all who do not obey their pronouncements. Even those who share their basic concern but are not inclined to be as adamant are viciously attacked. The possibility of solving our problems and saving the good works seems out of the question. The watchword is 'destroy them right now.' Any willingness to work out problems and to exemplify patience is immediately judged as weakness and compromise. There is an inability to see their

own weaknesses and mistakes. Ridicule, accusation and innuendo are used to discredit and destroy programs and brethren they dislike. The Spirit of Christ is gradually disappearing and a carnal spirit of hatred, strife and self-righteousness is emerging. Laws are being made where God made none. Division is being encouraged."

Brother Waddey then proposes a solution to the problem he describes: "God's church can never afford to give in to such agitations and demands. To do so is to allow ourselves to be permanently hamstrung and crippled. When the legalistic Judaizers sought to impose their man-made rules upon the Gentile brethren, Paul resisted them without hesitation. So must we. In dealing with our fellow Christians, let us always strive to be in absolute harmony with God's will. If we err, let us do so on the side of charity rather than harshness. Let every saint strive to keep in that middle road of truth and avoid the ditch of either liberalism or anti-ism (Prov. 25:27)." **Declaring God's Righteousness** is a good book and deserves a wide circulation.

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VOL. 24, NO. 10, OCTOBER 1982



## The Advantages Christ Presents!

C289.21  
C292

Gal. 3:23; 4:4-5

Gal. 5:3-4

Heb. 8:6

### "BEFORE FAITH CAME"

1. Kept Under the Law  
*Gal. 3:23-24; Rom. 7:1-4*
2. Moses Gave the Law  
*Deut. 4:44-45; John 1:17*
3. Law for Israel Only  
*Deut. 5:2-3; Deut. 6:20-24*
4. Till the Seed Come  
*Gal. 3:19; Gal. 4:4*
5. Animal Sacrifices Given  
*Heb. 9:18-20; Heb. 7:27*
6. No Forgiveness of Sins  
*Gal. 2:21; Heb. 10:1-4*
7. Children by Descent  
*Eph. 2:12; Phil. 3:4-6*
8. Sabbath Observance  
*Ex. 31:16-17; Deut. 5:14-15*

### "God Sent Forth Son"

1. Not Under the Law  
*Gal. 3:13; Gal. 4:5*
2. Jesus Gave the Gospel  
*Matt. 28:18-20; Heb. 2:1-3*
3. Gospel for All Men  
*Rom. 1:16; Acts 10:34*
4. Law Nailed to Cross  
*Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14-16*
5. Blood of Christ Shed  
*Heb. 9:15; Eph. 1:7*
6. Forgiveness of Sins  
*Col. 1:14; Acts 10:43*
7. Children by Faith  
*Gal. 3:26-27; 2 Cor. 5:17*
8. Our Rest Remaineth  
*Heb. 4:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:1*



# editorial

## A HOUSE DIVIDED

Our blessed Lord said: "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end." (Mark 3:24-26.) This passage states a grand principle: neither Satan, a house, nor a kingdom can stand when it is divided against itself. According to Matthew's account, this means every kingdom (Matt. 12:25), which would include the kingdom of God (as far as its earthly aspect is concerned). In short, Jesus said, divide the church and it will fall. Not fall as it relates to its divine nature; but fall as in respect to its human nature.

The church of the Lord is always faced with the possibility of division, caused by our human weaknesses and failure to understand and appreciate the divine nature of the church. But, as experience has proven for nearly 2000 years, we are not likely to divide over Scriptural matters. As the people of God, we still agree on the great fundamental principles upon which Christianity is built. Thus there is no division among us on the following foundation truths (we choose the following as examples, not intending them to be exhaustive):

1. God is . . . and He is supreme, the creator of heaven and earth and all that therein is (Acts 17:24).

2. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

3. The Holy Spirit, as the third person in the Godhead, is the guide and director by which the mind and will of God has been made known to the mind of man — that by His immediate direction through chosen men the revelation of God's plan to save has been revealed to us in the holy Scriptures.

4. The Bible is the word of God, the only divine source of faith and practice.

5. There is one church, the family of God (1 Tim. 3:15), to which all the saved are added (Acts 2:47), functioning as a unit to

do the will of God.

6. The gospel is the power of God to save (Rom. 1:16), the only message that we are authorized to proclaim.

7. Faith (not law) is the principle by which we are saved — faith is the principle by which the blood of Christ is applied to our sins.

8. Repentance is a change of mind, heart, character, and directions — a turning from self and the world to the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

9. Baptism is a command of Jesus Christ, the burial of a penitent believer in water for the remission of sins (Rom. 6:4; Acts 2:38).

10. Christianity is a divine religion planned by God, established by Christ, directed by the Holy Spirit, revealed in the Scriptures, and embraced by all Christians.

11. As Christians, we must continue in all things which are commanded by Christ and revealed to us in the gospel (Matt. 28:18).

12. That man is an eternal being, faced with one of two destinies — heaven or hell. Heaven is a place to be desired and hell a place to be shunned. This being true, the salvation of souls is the most vital, the most important, and the most far-reaching aspect of man's being.

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There is no division among us on these and many other fundamentals of the faith. Where then is the danger of division? The danger lies, in our judgment, in the unwillingness or inability to distinguish between the fundamental doctrines of the Bible and the conclusions, judgments, and opinions of men. There is nothing wrong with conclusions, judgments, and opinions *per se*. In fact, we must all draw conclusions, make judgments, and form opinions. The danger arises when we cannot distinguish between our conclusions, judgments, and opinions and what the Scriptures specifically say. When the two are confused, we end up binding human conclusions, judgments, and opinions on each other, not binding them as conclusions, judgments, and opinions but as that which the Scriptures plainly teach.

Thus the trouble is not so much in the differences which are among us; nor is it in the lack of sincerity or strong desire to be loyal to the truth (for this is precisely what we all want) by each of the parties who differ; it is our failure to make a distinction between Scriptural teaching and in our own forms, methods, traditions, conclusions, judgments, expediencies, and opinions. When we fail to make this distinction, we then bind our forms, methods, traditions, conclusions, judgments, expediencies, and opinions as that which the Scriptures teach. Each of us is so confident that his conclusions, judgments, and opinions are precisely what the Scriptures say and consequently we leave no room for the conclusions, judgments, and opinions of others. We all have high opinions of our opinions. But when others refuse to be bound by our own judgments, we become intolerant, withdraw fellowship, and brand them as false teachers working in apostate churches. Surely it does not take a Solomon to see that something is drastically wrong with our methods.

A false teacher is one who teaches false doctrines and binds them on others as marks of faithfulness and terms of fellowship. False doctrine is any doctrine not taught in the Scriptures. But our forms, methods, traditions, conclusions, judgments, expediencies, and opinions are not

taught in the Scriptures, even though most of them may be in harmony with the Scriptures and therefore permissible. Therefore when we teach them and make them a test of faithfulness and fellowship we are, by our own definition of a false teacher, teaching falsely — binding where God has not bound or loosing where He has not loosed. In binding anything other than that which is plainly revealed in the Scriptures (the thing that has caused the Lord's house to be divided) we become guilty of the very thing we condemn in others, namely, teaching false doctrine. False doctrine, whether in ourselves or in others, causes division among the people of God; truth never does. Thus the remedy for a divided house is for all to teach and follow the Bible and the Bible only.

## A HISTORY OF JERICO

The Jericho church in Mocksville is the oldest continuing church of Christ in the Carolinas. It was started on July 24, 1872, and has stood as a beacon light of truth for 110 years. In these years it has grown exceedingly rich in historical lore. Now, thanks to Bill Ijames, a member of Jericho, the story has been recorded for all of us to read, enjoy, and relive some of the remarkable events of the past. The book is called **A Short History of Jericho Church of Christ — July 24, 1882, to July 24, 1982**. Copies of this fascinating history may be ordered from the author at P.O. Box 884, Mocksville, NC 27028, at \$1.00 per copy (plus shipping). We urge you to get your copy before the second limited printing is gone. This is the kind of thing all of us should encourage and support. It will help preserve for the future our heritage of the past.

## FOUR FACTS

Human redemption is the grandest thing one can know in this world. It is God's greatest gift to man (because it involved the great gift of His Son). It should be the theme of our preaching, the theme of our songs, the theme of our art, the theme of our work, the theme of our play — the theme of our total life and being. Nothing else is worthy to occupy our hearts, our

thoughts, our acts. Jesus came to save! And we should not stop proclaiming salvation until all the world has heard.

But with all its cost, its beauty, its worth, its source, its end, most of us are slow to learn or else reluctant to accept four vital facts about salvation. We can accept one or two readily, but it seems rare indeed to find anyone who accepts all four. The four facts are:

**1. We cannot merit salvation by good works.** There seems to be something in man which says, "This cannot be." There must be something we can do to become worthy of the gift. But how much work would one have to do to purchase salvation from sins and a place in heaven? Nothing we could do could merit either.

**2. God does not expect us to merit salvation.** It is His free gift to us (Rom. 6:23) — a gift unmerited on our part (Eph. 5:8-9).

**3. The death of Christ paid our sin debt . . . in full!** To say that we must do something to earn salvation would be to say that the death of Christ was an insufficient offering, that it only partially paid the penalty for our sins. Our debt was paid by another — we cannot work to pay a debt that is already paid in full (cf. 1 John 2:1-2).

**4. Our part in the plan of salvation is to accept by faith (which includes obedience to Christ as Lord) Christ as Savior** — that is, accept Christ as our sin offering, appropriate His shed blood to our sins by obedience to the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17; 6:3-4, 16-18). This is simply to accept Christ as Savior and obey Him as Lord. There is no

other way to be saved. As we sing:

*Just as I am! without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!*

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." (Rom. 3:21-22.)

## WHY DEFEND DRINKING?

What one defends in public reveals a great deal about his own life and character. As relating to alcoholic beverages, there are usually two kinds of defenders. Some say, "Oh, I do not defend it, and I do not drink it, and I am opposed to its use, but the Bible does not condemn it as long as it is used in moderation." But if this is so, why is he opposed to something that God permits and why is he against that which the Bible allows? Does he know more than God? Does he see that the practice is unwise and destructive but that God must have thought it good and useful? Does he think that his standard of morality is higher than God's? Well, hardly. He simply wants to play both sides of the fence, but he winds up saying that he is against that which God is for, that is, the Bible approves something he opposes. This ought not to be. If the Bible approves it, we had all better be for it; if the Bible condemns it, and it does (e.g., Prov. 23:29-35; Isa. 5:11, 22; Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:18, ASV; 1 Thess. 5:7-8), we had all better be against it. When God takes a side, His people have no choice in the matter. God is always right.

But more frequently we hear professed Christians trying to defend the use of alcoholic beverages outright, and that for uses other than medical. But they usually add, "I do not drink [we have personally known some to lie about this, too], but the Bible approves the use of fermented wine when not excessively used — that is, the Bible condemns drunkenness, not drinking." This is to say that the Bible approves the cause but condemns the effect.



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Now we are frank to confess that those who so argue in public (before children and youth) bring themselves under deep suspicion on our part. A man usually defends only that which he believes, and there is little or no point in defending it unless he practices it. Why would anyone but a homosexual contradict the holy Scriptures (Rom. 1:24, 26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10), by defending the despicable life-style of men satisfying their sexual needs with men and women with women? And why would anyone who does not drink go contrary to

the Scriptures by advocating that the Bible approves the use of strong drink? It is a poor theory that cannot be practiced and it is absolutely absurd to teach others to practice something that one cannot in good conscience practice himself.

Thus when you hear a man advocating in public that the Scriptures approve drinking in moderation, look in his coat pocket, in the glove compartment of his car, or in his refrigerator and you may find the reason why.

## Alive And Together

**Michael R. Mobley, Mooresville, NC**

We must work and serve, obey and love, to keep the brotherhood alive and together; but pettiness will rip us apart and kill us. We are God's family, the Lord's church, and we should never allow it to be busted open like so many families are in our world today!

We carry our feelings on our sleeves; we are not spiritual. It is wrong. It is ungodly; when we do this, we are not pure. We who behave this way are being wicked for we are being selfish, proud, or jealous. We may even act in the name of "truth."

Why did Lot leave the company of Abraham? To prevent strife, to maintain the love and preserve the relationship. They did. The point is not that Lot left, but the motive for his action — "for we be brethren." (Gen. 13:8.)

Do we want to maintain the brotherly love and preserve God's family, our family? What destroys that? **Strife**. What causes strife? **Pettiness**. I believe it is found in three sources. Selfishness is to not love others. Pride is to not respect others. Jealousy is to not have humility toward others.

I also believe these evils are expressed in four kinds of activity. Backbiting is the willful stabbing at someone's character. Lying is to falsely undermine someone's reputation. Hatefulness is the malicious attacking, responding to, another's life. To be prejudice is to be selfishly stepping on others.

"Let all bitterness, wrath, and anger, and

clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God also forgave you in Christ." (Eph. 4:31-32; cf. 2 Cor. 12:19-21.)

Yes, we must oppose sin and evil things. But how often is that our true motive? And when we oppose evil, we must beware of the spirit and method with which we do it. When our attitudes and thinking are right, our behavior will be.

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# Why Was Solomon Successful?

John D. White, Union, SC

Jesus taught a valuable principle in Matthew 7:12 (the golden rule). In another way of looking at this Scripture, Jesus is telling us that, "Service is greatness." The more we live our lives for others, the more our lives will be filled with completeness and happiness. Jesus was a people-oriented person.

Another example of a people-oriented person was King Solomon. Solomon realized this principle in his life and it brought him fame, reputation, success and an overall high level of achievement. Would you please consider with me at this time some of the identifying factors or characteristics behind Solomon's success? Certainly, these will show that he was a man of integrity, even though at times he showed flaws or defects in his life.

**1. Solomon sought purity, godliness, humility and understanding.**

**A. Purity:** "And the king went to Gileah to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon the altar." (1 Kings 3:4.) He knew that only God could make him pure.

**B. Godliness:** "And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statues of David his father." (1 Kings 3:3.)

**C. Humility:** "... I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in." (1 Kings 3:7.) In this manner, Solomon expressed his trust in God. He was comparing his understanding to that of a little child.

**D. Understanding:** "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad." (1 Kings 3:9.) All these traits were preparing Solomon for powerful success.

**2. Solomon enjoyed a right attitude:** "And the speech (Solomon's) pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing." (1 Kings 3:10.) His attitude pleased God and produced for him more than enough understanding. Please read 1 Kings 3:10-14 for the complete story.

**3. Solomon was willing to listen to God's instructions:** "God said, ask what I shall give thee." (1 Kings 3:5.) Solomon was listening to God. Receiving instructions are a prerequisite for success.

Consider Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

The results were fantastic. Solomon was to be, indeed, a truly great and successful king because of his being, "people-oriented." And his attitude of deep dependence on God was the clinching factor. It is said of him, "So that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." (1 Kings 3:12.) One only has to read 1 Kings 4:21-34 in order to begin realizing the tremendous greatness of Solomon. The Queen of Sheba said it eloquently, "The half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." (1 Kings 10:7.)

Do you want to be successful like Solomon? Perhaps, we will never be as rich in a materialistic sense as was he, but, our riches in Christ (based on our obedience to the same) will far surpass that which was said concerning Solomon. Truly, when we face Jesus, when He returns in the clouds of the sky, for us, we can say, **the half has not been told.**

May God bless and keep you in His tender care. He loves you so very much.

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# Get All The Facts

**Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC**

“And one of them stood by, drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.” (Mark 14:47.) This is a short account of one of the most odd incidents in the life of Christ. Untimely, unexpected, and unrehearsed. Many lessons are to be learned from this incident.

The first lesson we see is that of a correct understanding of how to use Scriptures. All that we learn from Mark is that someone cut off someone's ear. When going to Matthew 26:51-53, we find that the swordsman was a disciple of Jesus. We also see he was severely rebuked for using his sword. Turning to Luke 22:50-51, we note that Jesus restored the ear to its place. Then in John 18:10, we read, “Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear. The servant's name was Malchus.” The lesson is simple — it takes all the Bible relates to conclude what the Bible requires. Each of these texts is incomplete and if isolated could project untruth. Having read all four gospel accounts we know that Peter with a sword cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant Malchus. Jesus rebuked Peter verbally and restored the ear.

From the above we learn how to take all that the Bible says and study it together for doctrine and application. In John 5:39, Jesus said, Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” The Jews searched yet did not find. They did not think — consequently they failed. Let us reconstruct this entire incident. In the first place, Jesus and His disciples were not pacifists. They had among themselves two swords (Luke 22:38). Jesus knew about them and said that two were enough. Peter had one of these swords. Our Bible readings confirm this. When the mob came, did Peter blindly attack the overpowering group? No! For several reasons! A lynch mob — and this crowd was that for sure! — would have pounced upon him violently.

Hysterical panic would have ensued! What really happened? Peter was brave and quick-witted. He drew the sword not blindly, but to call a bluff. He was telling the crowd — “We are out-manned but we can punish!” But who called Peter down? Not the mob, but Jesus. He pushed the sword back into its place. This literally pulled the rug from under Peter. He dropped back to follow afar off. Jesus had stopped an incident that could have exploded with bedlam. He restored the ear to Malchus.

**What are the applications of this incident?** By taking all the pieces and putting them together we find the total story. A similar procedure must be followed in determining the Biblical plan of salvation. No one Bible verse or conversion account names all the steps. We learn from here and there, to conclude the whole story. Man, hearing the truth, believes, repents, confesses, and is baptized. Various religions stop short, having only parts of the story. Some say you need only to believe, others indicate merely repent, some just confess. A few religions may say to be baptized but again there is division — some to be sprinkled, others poured, and some indicate to be immersed as an act of obedience only, as you are already saved before baptism. Then some believe that any or no form of baptism is all right. Confusing? The same is true of worship. All avenues of worship are not named in any one verse or illustration. We learn from here and there to construct God's complete will. This explains why some omit parts or add items to the worship.

But Malchus' ear must be applied to brethren as well. We see the plan of salvation and worship, but we still refuse to apply it in other situations. Why did we divide over Bible classes? Because no one verse specifically, step-by-step, names all the items. But going here and there we find all the elements taught. Some of our brethren teach against cooperation and orphan homes but admit all the components are there but deny the conclusions. Having



church buildings, many containers for the Lord's Supper, located preachers, Christian colleges, and so on — they all come from "Malchus' " ear. By taking all the Bible says and reconstructing it we have the authority

And how about giving? It is evident that the Bible teaches purposed giving. This means planned or pre-determined giving according to how we have prospered. Do you believe in accidental giving? Just reaching into your pocket and giving what falls out! Of course you do not! Paul teaches for man to "purpose in his heart." (2 Cor. 9:7.) The Macedonians pledged one year in advance (2 Cor. 8:10-12). Anything done in Jesus' name should be planned and performed. What is so secretive about giving? Do we hide attendance, preaching, good works? Jesus taught against "show giving." (Matt.

6). He was not teaching against giving. Jesus advises the right hand is not to know what the left is doing. We know that Abraham and Jacob pledged and gave. We know the widow gave two mites. Barnabas placed the money before the apostles' feet. Ananias and Sapphira did not die for telling the amount, but lying! It is of no concern to any human being how much we give. Only God and the giver are concerned. God knows if we are giving purposely and as we have been prospered and we know it also!

We all admit we need a church budget, and we therefore need to consider our own giving. Malchus' ear! What an incident! But its lessons are without end. Search the Scriptures — all the Scriptures. Find the elements involved and practice their conclusions.

---

## If Ye Love Me

**Mike Benson, Henderson, TN**

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Lord was never one to waste words. His statement here in John 14:15 is short and to the point. It says, in effect, that through our continual obedience, we show our love to Him.

Indeed, the true test of love is total obedience. Yet there is a difference in **professing** one's love and **displaying** one's love. All of us know too well of those who profess their love in words, but deny their love in actions. There are children who claim to love their parents, yet their conduct indicates otherwise. There are husbands and wives who say that they love each other, yet by their thoughtless unkindness cause one another a great deal of pain and sorrow.

Likewise there are Christians who (especially on Sunday) insist that they love the Lord, yet once they set foot outside the church building, they act as if they do not know what love means. Somehow these people must realize that it is nothing short of hypocrisy for an individual to claim to love Christ, while refusing to do His bidding. "We know that we have come to

know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, 'I know him,' but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him." (1 John 2:3-5.)

Sadly to say, some choose to ignore the Saviour's commandments. On the other hand, there are those who are willing to follow Jesus **but only up to a certain point**. Their spiritual commitment might be summed up in these words, "As long as the Lord's wishes don't interfere with mine, I'll be glad to go along with them." How easily they forget how Jesus feels about partial obedience. "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit you out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:15-16.)

The Christian who genuinely loves Jesus will obey Him, not because his parents tell him to, not because his preacher begs him to, not because his loved one pleads with him to, nor because he feels he "has to," but because he **wants to**.

# Preachers And The Moral Crisis

John Waddey, Knoxville, TN

In the last half of the 8th century B.C., Israel was in a moral crisis. God described her with searing words: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that deal corruptly! They have forsaken Jehovah, they have despised the Holy one of Israel . . . the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it. . . ." (Isa. 1:4-6.) A modern news columnist recently painted his concept of modern America: ". . . The America of the 1970's is in a class by itself. Never before has so large a share of the population indulged in an orgy of self-pampering, overdosing, loafing, sponging, splurging, cheating, shoplifting, looting, philandering, even murdering. That's what the statistics show." (Jack Anderson, "What Is Happening to the American Dream?" **Parade**, March 19, 1978.) One need not be a seer to conclude that we too are enmeshed in a moral crisis.

What is even more disturbing about this situation is the tolerant acceptance of it by the masses of the people. Signs of moral decadence are everywhere but the average American cannot see them. Society seems unable to deal with crime or to control the criminal element, it appears rather as a helpless victim. In our indulgent society, the will to believe, to resist, to contend, to fight, is gone. In place of this is the desire to conform, to drift, to follow, to yield, to surrender.

Is it not strange that a civilization that has produced the best airplanes, cars, and computers has also produced the worst types of people in abundance?

## Who Is Responsible?

It is common for the blame for such a social crisis to be passed on to politicians, educators, the media or some other public group. The question rises to this writer if a part of the blame may not lay upon the preachers of America. It is tragic that not only have most pulpits been muted on the moral challenges, but many have actually

capitulated to Satan's side in the conflict. Thus we see such paradoxes as preachers calling for "gay rights." But it cannot be denied that the majority are failing to provide strong moral leadership (1) in the public teaching of Christian ethics and (2) in leading the battle against these vices.

Sadly, many of my fellow preachers in the Lord's church are in this category. It is my personal experience that our people are looking for strong moral leadership in the pulpit. They will generally warmly encourage and help a man who launches out in a responsible way. Even the denominational world will follow our leadership in this area. All across the land there is a restless feeling of responsibility in the hearts of religious people. They know something needs to be done, they feel that their church leaders should do it, but the leadership is just not there. They will gladly fall in behind us when we lead out. (If today they follow our moral leadership, tomorrow they may well follow our spiritual leadership.)

## A Challenge to Preachers

Consider these words from Dr. Karl Menninger: "We know that the principle leadership in the morality realm should be the clergy's, but they seem to minimize their great traditional and historical opportunity to preach, to prophesy, to speak out. Some clergymen prefer pastoral counseling of individuals to the pulpit function. But the latter is a greater opportunity to both **heal and prevent**. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, indeed, and there is much prevention to be done for large numbers of people who hunger and thirst after direction toward righteousness. Clergymen have a golden opportunity to prevent some of the accumulated apprehensions, guilt, aggressive action, and other roots of later mental suffering and mental disease.

"How? Preach! Tell it like it is. Say it from the pulpit. Cry it from the housetops.

"What shall we cry?

"Cry comfort, cry repentance, cry hope. Because recognition of our part in the

world transgression is the only remaining hope.” (**Whatever Became of Sin?** New York, Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1974.)

Remember brethren, this is no preacher or elder, it is a world famous psychiatrist. Surely if he sees the need for strong, fearless moral leadership in the pulpit, we can.

### Prophetic Preaching

For our pulpit models we need to study the ancient Hebrew prophets of Jehovah. Preaching like theirs would revolutionize our diseased society and the church. God is still looking for men who will “stand in the gap” of the broken besieged walls of Zion and build up those damaged moral and

spiritual walls (Ezek. 22:30). They were scarce in Ezekiel’s day, as in ours. We, however, can be the volunteers who stand up bravely and volunteer, Lord “here am I; send me.” (Isa. 6:8). Whether we win or lose in this great moral battle for the hearts and minds of men, at least they will know “that there hath been a prophet among them.” (Ezek. 2:5.) Always remember God’s charge to Ezekiel: “Thou son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words . . . nor be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.” (Ezek. 2:6-7.)

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## ILLUSTRATED EXPOSITIONS

# Foolish Reasonings

Howard Winters, West Jefferson, NC

### The Principle

We often reach our conclusions and then search for and manipulate the evidence to prove them. It is not wrong to reach a conclusion before we are in possession of all the evidence (if this were the case then no conclusion could ever be reached), but we should study the evidence which is available in order to arrive at our conclusions. The wrong comes when we have to deny the validity of reason in order to stubbornly hold on to a preconceived conclusion. This is to say that our conclusions are right and reason must be denied when it does not prove them or manipulated in order to prove them. There are times when we all fall into this trap, when we become foolish in our reasoning.

I grew up in a large family and there were many disagreements among the children. When we discussed almost any subject (whether the earth was round or flat, how radio works, politics, religion, etc.), a heated argument generally ensued. After each of us had had our say many times over, and no progress was evidenced, Mother would usually put an end to the arguing by saying, “Convince a man against his will and he is of the same opinion still.” That was just another way of say-

ing that you cannot show a person something he does not want to see. Or to put it another way, you cannot by sound argument lead one to a conclusion he does not want to accept. If he cannot find flaws in the reasoning process, he will rationalize by denying the trustworthiness of reason itself.

### The Passage

Paul understood this principle and man’s susceptibility to it when he wrote, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” “Vain in their imaginations” of the KJV becomes “vain in their reasonings” in the ASV (Rom. 1:21).

### The Exposition

**Because that, when they knew God,** — either as the cause of a vast effect (creation) or by some incomplete form of revelation. The exact source of their knowledge is not easy to ascertain, but probably their incomplete or limited association with revelation had led them to conclude that God was the great power back of all created things. **They glorified him not as God,** — they acted contrary to the knowledge they possessed. They thus knowingly sinned. That is, they sinned against knowledge. They rejected right for wrong. **Neither were**



**thankful;** — they were ingrates in that they did not acknowledge God as the giver of all blessings (James 1:17; Luke 17:12-17). And their ingratitude led them to vain imaginations or foolish reasonings, darkened hearts, deception, and idolatry (Romans 1:21-23). **But became vain in their imaginations,** — became vain in their reasonings (ASV); their thinking became futile (NIV). Sound reasoning led them to a knowledge of the Creator, but they had turned from this knowledge to their own ways and conclusions — conclusions which they had reached by foolish reasonings. In order to do this, they had to corrupt their own reasoning process — they chose their own futile thinking over sound reasoning. Thus their reasoning became foolish, not because reasoning itself is foolish but because they chose their foolish thinking rather than reason. **And their foolish heart was darkened.** — They closed out the light of truth by their foolish reasonings and God gave them the darkness of falsehood — a strong delusion (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

### The Illustration

Such dishonest handling of truth is not limited to the Gentiles in the ancient world. It saturates modern society. A good example of this is Charles Darwin, the popularizer of modern evolutionary thought. Mayo W. Hazeltine records the following information about him concerning the order of the universe arguing for the necessity of a guiding mind back of it all: "The Duke of Argyll has recorded the few words on the subject spoken by Darwin in the last year of his life. The Duke said that it was impossible to look at the wonderful contrivances for certain purposes in nature, and fail to recognize that they were the effect and expression of mind. Darwin looked at the Duke very hard, and said, 'Well, that often comes over me with overwhelming force; but at other times' — here he shook his head vaguely — 'it seems to go away.' " At another time, according to Hazeltine, Darwin expressed the "inward conviction that the universe is not the result of chance." But when his mind so reasoned, he then questioned, not the validity of his reasoning, but the validity of the mind's

power to reason correctly on such a profound subject. He said, "But, then, with me the harried doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value, or at all trustworthy. Would anyone trust the convictions in a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?" (**Beacon Lights of History**, Vol. XIV, pp. 171-172.) Sound reason thus led Darwin to creation (and creation inevitably leads to the Creator) but he did not want to believe in creation; instead he wanted to believe in chance development. He therefore rejected his own process of reasoning as trustworthy. But if the mind cannot be trusted to reason back to a Creator (when every form of sound reason known to the mind points to this conclusion), the question always arises in my mind as to how it can be trusted to reason through the dingy maze to evolution? Darwin thus had a theory that he loved more than he loved the truth. One of them had to go (when there was a conflict between them). He chose to reject truth and in order to do so he had to resort to foolish reasonings.

### Conclusion

God made the human mind to reason . . . and to reason soundly. When reason runs contrary to what one believes or to his preconceived ideas, he should change his belief and his preconception rather than corrupting reasoning. Man destroys something precious in his soul when he is forced to deny the validity of conclusions reached by the sound reason of his own mind. It is therefore better to accept reason than to reason foolishly.

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# The Way Of Salvation

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

A damsel at Philippi declared of Paul and his co-workers, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." (Acts 16:17.) What are some things we can know about the way of salvation?

It is **the way of Christ** (John 14:6). There is no other possible salvation (Acts 4:12). Because it is through Christ, the way of salvation is the way of grace (Heb. 2:9), and the way of blood (Rev. 5:9). It cannot, therefore, be a way of human merit or human design (Eph. 2:8-9).

The way of salvation is a **restricted way** (Matt. 7:14). It is open to all (Acts 10:34-35); but entered by few. Instead many "pervert the right ways of the Lord" (Acts 13:10) and "walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16).

It is **the way of truth** (2 Pet. 2:2). All of God's word is truth (John 17:17), and salvation is received by obedience to the truth (1 Pet. 1:22-25). This makes the hearing of the gospel an absolute requisite for entering the way of salvation (Rom. 1:16; 10:13-15). Practically, this means that people do not accidentally stumble into the way of salvation without learning first what is the truth (John 6:44-45).

The way of salvation is **the way of faith and obedience**. In Acts 24:14 (ASV) Paul

declared, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets." Key words are "the way," "serve," and "believing." Paul had entered "the way" by believing in Christ, repenting of his rebellious life, and by being baptized (Acts 22:16). This initial service (obedience) was followed by continuing submission to the commandments of the Lord (Matt. 28:19-20).

It should also be noted in Paul's statement above that enemies called the way "a sect." This indicates that "the way" involved a recognizable organization. There were men and women who could be identified as members "of the way" (Acts 9:2). This points to the fact that the way of salvation is **the way of the church** (Acts 2:47).

The way of salvation is **the way of faithfulness**. Some "have forsaken the right way" (2 Pet. 2:15). When they apostatize, it would have been better for them never to have known "the way of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

The way of salvation is "**the way of holiness**"; even "wayfaring men, though fools" can successfully walk this way to heaven (Isa. 35:8). Such "fools" are those who claim no wisdom for themselves, but who accept and trust the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 2:5-13).

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# Fence-Building

**Jerry Gross, Doraville, GA**

In Mark 7 there is portrayed a classic confrontation between our Lord and the scribes and Pharisees. In this clash between Jesus and the Pharisees, we are able to see the strong contrast between Jesus' approach to religion and that of the Pharisees. One of the facets of Pharisaical religion that Jesus found so objectionable was their practice of "fence-building." In this article we shall endeavor to discover exactly what it was about this practice that Jesus rejected as being opposed to true religion. In this writer's estimation the practice condemned by Jesus is alive and well in the church today; hence, it is crucial that we learn from such encounters as Mark 7 the nature of true religion as Jesus portrays it.

## **A Fence for the Law**

In Mark 7 there are several references to the "traditions of the elders" which Jesus describes as the "traditions of men" and "your tradition." Part of that tradition was the "Fence about the Law" (seyag la-torah). In speaking of the origin of this part of the Jewish tradition, George Foot Moore stated: "One of the maxims ascribed to the men of the Great Assembly (Abot 1,1), is, 'Make a fence for the Law,' that is, protect it by surrounding it with cautionary rules to halt a man like a danger signal before he gets within breaking distance of the divine statute itself." (*Judaism*, Vol. I, p. 259). Scriptural warrant for this practice was found in Leviticus 18:30 which was interpreted as "Make an injunction additional to my injunction." (*Ibid.*) Such passages as Deuteronomy 4:2 were gotten around through exegesis, and in Deuteronomy 17:11 they found "implicit confidence in the courts of each generation and obedience to them prescribed, and they extended the same authority to the decisions and decrees of the rabbinical *bet din*." (*Ibid.*)

Surely the original intent of this fence-building was honorable. For instance, the law forbade work on the Sabbath day (Ex. 20:8-11). Because of the severity of the

penalty for violating the Sabbath (cf. Num. 15:32-36), it was essential that rules be set so one might know when he had done "work." Consequently, a list of thirty-nine types of prohibited work was drawn up (see Emil Schurer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div. II, Vol. II, Sec. 28). But even these thirty-nine classes of work had to be further interpreted. For instance, the *Mishnah* records that a tailor should not go out with his needle near to nightfall lest he violate the law (Ex. 16:29 and Jer. 17:22).

It was not long, however, before the oral law came to be regarded to be just as binding as the written law. It was this practice of binding upon everyone the "fences" legislated by the interpreters of the law, that Jesus found so objectionable.

## **What Is Wrong With Fence-Building?**

Now, there were several facets of the fence-building approach to religion that Jesus found objectionable. One of his main criticisms, however, was that such practices led to a failure to recognize the real purpose behind the law. For instance, the practice of invoking "Corban" as a means of getting around divinely-given obligations to one's parents caused the Pharisee to make void the divine intent of the law. A moment's reflection enables us to realize that values antedate law. That is, God gave His law to make known, embody, safeguard, and promote certain previously existing values. It is because of the inherent values in the parental relationship that God ordained through law that parents are to be honored. It is easy though for one to replace a proper relationship to parents with a "proper" relationship to law about one's parents. So, if one can maneuver so that he has not technically violated the law, then he can feel safe even though he has really failed to affirm the values behind the law. Jesus' criticism was that, through "many such things," they made void the word of God (v. 13).



## Modern Fence-Building

Wherever there is a tendency to relate to God through a legalistic approach to law-keeping, there is also a tendency to build and bind fences. Now, this is not to say that fence-building *per se* is wrong. If we have any respect for the commandments of God, we must build some fences to help us keep a safe distance from violating His will. In some areas of our lives we are simply too weak to get very close to sin without succumbing. Hence, we need personal "fences" that keep us a safe distance away from temptation. But the key word here is "personal." Every Christian who is in earnest about his own spirituality must provide for himself fences against sin. He has no right, however, to bind those fences upon others as if they were part of the law of God.

Perhaps an example will help. My wife religiously refrains from going shopping. She tells me that as long as she stays away from the malls she is very content with what she has. However, once she sees what she could have, then she begins to feel dissatisfied with what we have, and she is sorely tempted to spend money that she does not have to buy things she really does not need. Now, abstaining from window shopping is her fence; she does not intend to bind it upon others. Others may not have the same struggles she experiences. She needs her fences, but they may not be for others.

On the other hand, I once heard of a preacher who was withdrawn from for playing Rook. Likely his only crime was that of violating a fence that had become institutionalized as law. One can easily see that a sequence of fences had been erected to prevent Christians from violating some genuine prohibition of the will of God. The problem was, though, that the fences, which surely had validity for someone at some point, had become part of the law of God. It is this practice of binding personal fences upon a brotherhood, a church, or an individual that Jesus is condemning.

### The Problem With Imposing Fences

It is evident that there are several serious things wrong with efforts on the part of

some in the church to bind personal fences upon others. First, such a practice is built upon the faulty assumption that everyone is at the same point in the spiritual development. A fence serves the useful purpose of giving an individual time or distance away from temptation so that he might keep his heart from sin. But the amount of time and distance is going to vary from person to person and sin to sin. This is not to say that some of us can be more reckless, with reference to sin, than others; but neither is it to say that all of us have to build our fences at the same place as the most conservative member of the congregation. Prudence demands that one should give his most tempting sins as wide a berth as possible, but it is the responsibility of the individual to know his own weaknesses and to place his own fences accordingly.

Secondly, a fence that I build for myself is going to serve me better than a fence someone else constructs and imposes upon me. For a fence to be effective in helping me to control sin in my own life, it has to be voluntarily accepted and its rationale understood. One of the problems with preachers building fences for the sisters in the congregation on the matter of modest dress is that the sisters do not fully understand the rationale behind such rules. Consequently, rather than focusing on the real issues regarding the potential sins involved, the focus is shifted to whether or not the sisters are going to let a preacher dictate what they can or cannot wear. Also at issue is the question of how one is going to respond to different forms of subtle, and not so subtle, pressure tactics. Hence, the resistance that results is not over the merits of particular fences but whether or not someone else can force me to accept a man-made dress code that I do not fully understand. Likely our efforts would be more productive of good if we would spend more time explaining, and less time employing pressure tactics to ensure conformity.

Thirdly, when the church acquiesces to either self-appointed or church appointed fence-builders, then moral development in the members is stunted. Moral development within each member is essential in order to enable him/her to make appropriate moral

judgments within the context of their own unique life settings. It is impossible for the church to legislate for every conceivable moral decision making setting. Hence, the only way that we can enable Christians to be responsible moral agents is by fostering within them the qualities of moral discernment. It is evident that one's decisions are going to flow out of the kind of person one is. And many times a person does not have before him a handy answer book with every conceivable moral dilemma worked out in detail. That is why Jesus stressed that character precedes and determines conduct, and why he constantly preached about making the reign of God effective in shaping one's life. However, when a person becomes accustomed to letting others set fences for him then the sort of moral exercise needed to develop ethical judgment is thwarted. One does not have to have much moral discernment to live by fences others have constructed. It does take maturity and judgment for one to assume the responsibility for building his own fences against the sins he finds especially besetting.

## Conclusion

Because of the inherent tendency of a respect for law to turn into legalism, it is essential that those of us who reverence the will of God, as expressed in His commandments, be careful lest we overzealously bind our own personal fences upon others. Fences are essential to godly living; but, the only kind of fences that ultimately result in genuine moral development are those which we voluntarily accept for ourselves as personal guides for conduct. Coercive fence-building inevitably results in increased conflict, resistance, and resentment among those who are struggling for their own independent moral responsibility before God.



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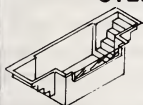
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The most popular and far-reaching issue we have ever run of **Carolina Christian** was the June 1981 number on Crossroadsism. Hundreds of request for additional copies have been received from all over the nation. The articles have now been reprinted (not the whole issue) and are available for distribution. 20¢ per copy (plus postage), \$15 per hundred.

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# Spiritual Strength

**Harmon Caldwell, Statesville, NC**

To the church in Ephesus, Paul gave this: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." (Eph. 6:10.)

Weakness physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually is a characteristic by no means desirable, and that most people, particularly in the realms of the physical and mental, wish to avoid.

Physical exercise is good, and every opportunity to increase one's stamina and prowess should be taken advantage of. Increase in mental aptitude should be the desire of all. No one admires a dolt. As far as our intelligence will permit we should learn — about things, people, history, science, art, music, mechanics, et. al. Not that we should learn all about all of these things, but we should want to educate ourselves in as many facets of life as we can and is feasible. But even so — these are material and thus temporal. Which is why, in comparing the physical with the spiritual, Paul remarked, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8.)

Samson was strong physically. Solomon was possessed of great wisdom. Though each was strong in his own way, their lives demonstrated the inadequacy of mental and physical strength to the exclusion of the spiritual.

Strength in service unto God, spiritual strength, is of inestimable value. It is of profound significance, it is essential. It is necessary in order for one to make up his mind to become a Christian in the first place, for no person who is not possessed of initial spiritual strength will determine in his heart to believe in and to obey the Lord. It is necessary in order for Christians to overcome temptations. How manifest they are each day! How deeply are we stirred often to engage in unbecoming conduct or speech, or to refuse to do the things God has given us to do. Although we can obtain

assistance from God in overcoming temptations and trials of life and in avoiding the throes of Satan (1 Cor. 10:13), it remains that we are to have courage and determination — indeed spiritual strength. Paul speaks of the "shield of faith" quenching (turning back) the fiery darts of the wicked one. Strength in overcoming temptation lies, therefore, in strength in faith. It is that essential ingredient that produces victory in time of trial.

Spiritual strength is necessary in order to be longsuffering and forbearing. When we are patient with the circumstances of the moment, and with people and jobs and responsibilities that are parts of our everyday life and environment, we learn to be content with the state we are in, as Paul, and we strive through patient effort to carry on the work of the Lord rather than grow weary, despondent, and careless in our well-doing.

Spiritual strength also is essential in maintaining purity in our lives and in doctrinal convictions. Without it we can well be tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine. But to walk by faith is to walk by the source of it, which is the word of God (2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17).

In demonstrating faith in the Lord we will be faithful in our attendance. We are strong in the Lord when we place His kingdom first in our lives, not being concerned so much with physical welfare, but in our spiritual attainments. When we are strong spiritually, we will always be seeking opportunity to do for others, to be unselfish, to teach them, edify them. When we are strong spiritually, we will give our hearts to Him who gave His life for us. We will surely abound unto every good work.

In this thought from Ephesians six, in which Paul tells us to be strong in the Lord, it is evident that he was not unaware that in the discharge of our duties, we would surely need strength from above. He knew that we would have many, and sometimes mighty foes with which to contend and to meet them we would need strength — strength of



character, of ability, and of conviction. Let us be mindful that the only means of victory over the devil and his allies is strength from the Lord. Let us all be strong,

courageous in His cause. Let us realize that God is our strength, and that we must always rely on Him and His promises.



# BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

## **F-HC Conducts Future Church Leaders Workshop**

**Henderson, Tenn.** Freed-Hardeman College conducted its second annual Future Church Leaders Workshop July 5-9 with 160 young men, aged 9-18, attending the sessions. A staff of six teachers and twenty counselors were involved in conducting the workshop at the Freed-Hardeman College campus.

Jerrie Barber, one of the teachers at this year's workshop and minister of the Central church in Dalton, Ga., observed that "the greatest value of this program has been its ability to plant seeds of desire in young men to participate in the work of the church." The young men spent time learning about leadership roles and responsibilities in addition to receiving instruction in leading singing and making short talks.

For details regarding next year's workshop, interested churches should contact Coleman Crocker, a member of the F-HC faculty and organizer of the week-long program, at the college.

## **Harding Personnel Work in Summer Campaigns**

**Searcy, Ark.** Approximately 300 members of the Harding University faculty, staff and student body were involved in conducting campaigns throughout the world this past summer. The workers went to Scotland, England, Italy, Germany, Australia, Kenya, Venezuela, Honduras, the Virgin Islands, and several countries behind the Iron Curtain in addition to cities in the United States. Thirteen baptisms were reported as a result of the campaigns and over 3,000,000 pieces of religious lit-

erature were distributed.

## **Colleges Get New Presidents**

Alabama Christian College in Montgomery, Alabama, and Lubbock Christian College in Lubbock, Texas, recently announced the selection of new presidents. At Alabama Christian, Ernest Clevenger, Jr., will succeed J. Walker Whittle. Whittle served as president for a year before resigning in order to return to the classroom at Freed-Hardeman College where he previously taught for twenty-seven years. Clevenger is a noted preacher, author, and educator who had served as academic dean at ACC from 1976-79. At Lubbock Christian College, Steven Lemley was named as the fourth president of that institution. Lemley replaces Harvie M. Pruitt, who will remain at LCC as president of the Endowment Foundation and Distinguished Professor of Education.

## **50 Years as a Gospel Preacher**

**Nashville, Tenn.** On Sept. 19, 1982, brother Paul Tucker celebrated 50 years of service as a preacher of the gospel. Of those 50 years, 30 were spent with three churches in Nashville, the most recent being the great Crieve Hall church (16 years). Brother Tucker was honored by the Crieve Hall congregation on Sept. 19 for his years of faithful service. In addition to being known as an outstanding preacher, brother Tucker is also known as the author of the popular trace, "Christianity Is Undenominational."

## **An Urgent Need**

**Owasso, Okla.** Duane Hendrickson is the preacher for the Owasso congregation in Owasso, Oklahoma. Two years ago Duane

and his wife, Betty, lost their only daughter as a result of toxemia. It has now been discovered that sister Hendrickson is suffering from a rare and fast growing cancer that was previously known to be common only to teenagers. According to doctors, M.D. Anderson Cancer and Tumor Clinic in Houston, Betty is the oldest person on their records to be afflicted with the disease.

Medical expenses for the Hendricksons have far exceeded their ability to pay them. The elders of the Owasso church are making an urgent appeal to concerned Christians to help defray the medical costs for Duane and Betty. Anyone interested in helping may write: The Elders, Owasso Church of Christ, P.O. Box 89, Owasso, Oklahoma 74055.

## Carolina Church News

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29731-6988. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Statesville.** Broad Street will hold a gospel meeting October 17-21 with George DeHoff.

**Fayetteville.** Willie Franklin will be the featured speaker at the Ninth Annual Youth Rally at Helen Street church November 5-7.

**Kannapolis.** Bobby Duncan of Jasper, Alabama, will preach in a gospel meeting October 24-29.

**Roanoke Rapids.** The church in Roanoke Rapids has a new name and location. The congregation is now known as the Roanoke church of Christ, and meets at 312 Roanoke Avenue. The new meeting place is located on the main street of the city. The mailing address is still P.O. Box 691. A gospel meeting is planned for October 22-24, with Bill Harper of Hopewell, Virginia, preaching. In addition, a weekly evangelistic Bible study was initiated in September. Dan Williams is the minister.

**Raleigh.** Mile Gifford will be working with Brooks Avenue as Youth Minister. He is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College and Harding Graduate School.

**Elizabethtown.** Gary Vance is the new preacher. He is a native of Winston-Salem and a graduate of East Tennessee School of

Preaching.

**Durham.** A report in the South Fork, Winston-Salem bulletin, reported great success in Clifford Davis' campaign in Durham, with eight conversions up to that time.

**Hickory.** Barry Elliott will be leaving Albemarle to locate with the congregation on Fairgrove Church Road in Hickory.

We received a card from Esten Macon of Morrison, Tennessee, stating that he has support for two meetings and is interested in the work in the Carolinas.

#### N.C. Baptisms

Westside, Charlotte, 2; Jacksonville, 4; Salisbury, 2; Abilene, Statesville, 4; Raleigh, 11; Providence Road, Charlotte, 9; Brevard, 2; Helen Street, Fayetteville, 3; Hickory, 2; Newton, 7; Northview, Statesville, 3; Asheboro, 2; West Jefferson, 4; Eastside, Charlotte, 12; South Fork, Winston-Salem, 2; Durham, 8; Burlington, 1; Archdale, Charlotte, 1. Total: 79.

#### East Charlotte

TONY COUICK, Reporting: On June 6, 1982, Tony Couick and his family moved to East Charlotte from the church on the Westside of that same city. Tony is now the full-time evangelist for the church located at 7700 Albemarle Road.

On August 1, 1982, an old attendance record was broken. Ninety-four people attended the morning worship service, with well over one hundred attending the luncheon following.

Since July 19, twelve people have been baptized into Christ. An extensive Bible

class program has been launched to accommodate the needs of the church here. Space has become a problem, and we are looking to build a building that will meet our needs adequately.

The average attendance has changed since June. Many people have placed fellowship with us, and many that were wayward have returned, bringing the attendance back up to between seventy and eighty. Wednesday nights find us spending time studying "Church Growth," and we average sixty people each time.

Great things are in store for the church here, and it is our prayer that you will remember this congregation in your prayers as we grow. Please come by and visit with us when you are in the Charlotte area.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Columbia.** Winfred Clark will preach at St. Andrews Road October 31 through November 4. The following report by Jerry Hurt appeared in their August 22 bulletin:

"Our 1982 'Rally for Christ' is now history. There were 417 who registered; and a record attendance of 472 at the Sunday morning worship service. We want to thank all of you who attended. We feel enriched by your having visited with us. A special 'thanks' to our speakers who brought us such excellent lessons, to the elders for their oversight and allowing us to sponsor the Youth Rally, and for the overall support of the congregation. May much good be accomplished from the seed which was sown; and to God give the glory."

**Greenville.** Doug Parsons will preach at Northeast October 31 through November 3.

**Clemson.** Students attending Clemson University can obtain information about the congregation there by calling 654-3583 or 882-1759.

**Greenville.** Edgewood congregation has announced plans to help support a new mission effort in Scotland.

**Myrtle Beach.** A new attendance record of 531 was set in July.

**Lexington.** Five deacons have been appointed.

**Charleston.** The sixteen-year-old son of Frank McElveens was killed in a car acci-

dent in July.

**Rock Hill.** Rufus Johnson of Abilene, Texas, will speak in a gospel meeting at the Crawford Road congregation October 17-22.

## **S.C. Baptisms**

Essex Village, Charleston, 2; West Columbia, 2; Lexington, 3; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 3; Myrtle Beach, 2; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 7; North Charleston, 1; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 1. Total: 22.

## **Union**

**JOHN D. WHITE, Reporting:** During the last month we had one restoration and one baptism here in Union and two baptisms in a meeting in which I did the preaching in Tryon, N.C.

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# **A Look At Books**

**Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC**

**Fifty TV Sermon Outlines, J.P. Williams, J.C. Choate Pub., 60 pages, paper, \$2.00.**

In this book of sermon outlines, brother Williams presents material preached on television station KVVG in Tulare, California, in 1956 and 1957. The lessons are fundamental and true to the Book. Among the lessons is a series of four on "The Church, a Divine Institution." There are sermons on the parables of Jesus, the plan of salvation, the beautitudes, "The Ideal Home," and biographies. The outlines are well constructed. These lessons could easily be adapted to radio work or regular pulpit preaching.

**Sermon Skeletons, J.C. Choate, J.C. Choate Pub., 63 pages, paper, \$2.00.**

This book was originally printed in 1958. It has been in demand since that time. It is literally what its title declares: sermon skeletons. There are 100 titles with 12 points each. These skeleton outlines will be useful in "priming the pump" when the well has gone dry. They also provide interesting thoughts for radio sermons or devotional talks. A helpful volume of "seed thoughts." It deserves a wide circulation.



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## A Look At Books

Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

**Character-Cameos From the Bible**, John Waddey, J.C. Choate Publications, Winona, Mississippi 38967, 212 pages, paper, \$3.00.

This is a reprinting of a book which appeared in 1977. The sermons contained in the book were preached at the Karns church in Knoxville, TN, during 1976. In the 40 sermons, brother Waddey has sermons on Ahithophel, the angel of Jehovah, Dorcas, Epaphroditus, Euodia and Syntyche, Gamaliel, Jethro Reuel, Methuselah, Pilate, Uzzah and Zaccheus.

These sermons are well researched and

well constructed. B.C. Goodpasture once observed, "I think that biography is one of the most profitable sources of Biblical study. In fact, it is one of the most profitable sources of general historical study. Someone has said that all history is biography. Who has not profited by Plutarch's story of the forty-six parallel lives? It is especially profitable to study the biographies revealed in the Bible. We can best understand principles when we find them expressed in terms of human conduct." We recommend this book highly. It deserves wide circulation. The material it contains should be preached.

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## Editorial Book Views

**A Book-By-Book Study of the Old Testament and A Book-By-Book Study of the New Testament**, Rubel Shelly; 20th Century Christian, P.O. Box 40526, Nashville, TN 37204; 123 pages, \$6.95 each.

Rubel Shelly, a young man who has already written 12 or 15 books, is one of the brightest lights in the church today. He is brilliant, learned, capable, and true to the Book of God. Anything that comes from his pen is worthy of serious study, but these two books fill a very special need and supply us with a rich source of help where help from our brethren have been extremely limited in the past. Each book in the Bible is dealt with in an adequate, helpful, challenging way. While the studies are in outline form (enabling the author to cover far more ground in shorter space), they are extensive enough to provide all the foundation one needs to build on. Each outline features at

least four sections (besides the introduction and conclusion and Bible reading schedule) in which background material is given, the message of the book stated, major themes and issues are pinpointed, and a reader's guide to the book is provided. Each lesson is structured so as to provide everyone with the needed help to study the Bible — to make study more profitable, meaningful, and enjoyable. Each book is divided into 26 lessons and the two together are designed to enable you to study through the whole Bible in a year's time, whether they are used in a class or in personal study. In our judgment, there is currently not a better survey of the Bible available than these two books. We are excited about them and we urge both churches and individuals to get them, use them, and enjoy the product — a new and exciting adventure of studying the whole Bible book-by-book.

# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

VOL. 24, NO. 11, NOVEMBER 1982



C289.21  
C292

## NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM

As commanded by CHRIST  
and His APOSTLES

### By the authority of Christ

Matt. 28:18-20

### Into CHRIST

Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13

### In obedience to command

Acts 10:48; Heb. 5:8-9

### Raised to walk a new life

Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 3:1

### For remission of our sins

Acts 2:38; 22:16

### A NEW creature in CHRIST

Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17

### Buried in baptism

Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12

### Only one baptism

Eph. 4:5

### WARNINGS

2 John 9

# editorial

## OPINIONS

Opinions, especially the opinions of others, are often troublesome things in the church, but they are something we all have . . . and will continue to have because many of them are necessary to life and conduct. There is, however, a sharp distinction in faith and opinion. Faith is, in its fundamental nature, a belief of the testimony of the Scriptures — the Scriptures say it, we believe it, and the result is faith. Opinion (and here we speak of religious opinions) is a belief not based on the plain testimony of Scripture. There may or may not be Scriptural evidence for it (and there may be an abundance of evidence unknown to the holder) but it is based either on no evidence, insufficient evidence, or evidence other than that which is plainly taught in the Scriptures. Paul seems to have made this distinction when he said, "(For we walk by faith, not by sight.)" (2 Cor. 5:7.) To walk by faith is to be directed by the testimony of the Scriptures: for faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). To walk by sight then is to walk by some other directions — it is to follow another source of authority or information. This would certainly include opinion, belief based upon something other than the Scriptures. It is true that one may believe an opinion as strongly as he believes the Bible, and his opinion may be true, but it must be categorized as an opinion because of the manner by which it is received and the source from which it came. To say that a thing is an opinion is not to say that it is false; it is simply to say that it is based on insufficient Scriptural evidences or evidences (regardless of how strong) other than the Scriptures. Only that which is taught in the Scriptures, either implicitly or explicitly, can be a matter of faith. All beliefs which are arrived at by other means (or sources) are matters of opinion.

All should understand that there is absolutely nothing wrong with opinions *per se*. Opinions may be true or they may be false. But it is usually our opinion that the opin-

ions of others are inferior to our own. We make no secret of the fact that we have a high opinion of our opinions. We love them. We believe they are right. And if we did not believe they were the best we would change them. On the other hand, most of us have a low opinion of the opinions of others, unless, of course, their opinions agree with ours. Or as Sydney Tremayne put it, "No one agrees with other people's opinions; he merely agrees with his own opinions expressed by somebody else." Consequently we invariably conclude, "My opinion is true; his opinion is false."

Fortunately for us, both the Bible (Rom. 14) and the leaders in the Restoration Movement recognized the fact that different opinions in non-essential matters (if it is not taught in the Scriptures it is non-essential; if it is taught in the Scriptures then it is a matter of faith) is a fact of life, one that will always be with us. But the Bible is very strong in its denouncement of binding matters of opinion on others or making unrevealed things matters of faith, doctrine, and terms of fellowship (see for example Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11). The Bible permits the holding of an opinion as personal property just so long as it does not in-

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Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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terfere with one's obedience to God and is not bound on the conscience of others. The restoration leaders expressed it well in a slogan: "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, charity (love)." But it seems that the heirs of the restoration plea, while they are sold on the concept of restoring New Testament Christianity, are having second thoughts about restoring the liberty of opinion that the gospel allows. Many of us have such high regards for our own opinion that we obviously feel that if God's is not the same as ours, He should change His. And certainly everyone else should. We heard one preacher who holds an opinion so strongly (and his opinion is exactly opposite to what God has plainly said in His word) that he spent a half hour's lecture trying to prevent God from saying what he had already said. He has let opinion replace faith — he believes his own conclusions rather than what God has revealed. And when anyone steps forward to proclaim his belief of the testimony of Scripture, he immediately brands him as a false teacher. With him, opinion has become more important than

faith.

By binding our own opinions, we eliminate for all practical purposes all opinions but our own. We are denying liberty of opinion to all but ourselves. And in doing so we are letting human opinion replace the divine word of God as our source of faith and practice. Thus we need to learn anew that in matters of faith there can and must be unity but in matters of opinion there must always be liberty. Essential matters of faith are bound; but we must never bind non-essential matters of opinion.

But our problem is not so much in understanding this principle as it is in our failure, inability, or refusal to distinguish between faith and opinion. Our opinions often become so strong that they are fused into our thinking, and thus bound on our conscience, as matters of faith. We thus bind matters of opinion as matters of faith, usually not intentionally but because we confuse the two. And because we think our matters of opinion are matters of faith we try to bind them on others. But when others have a different opinion, they reject ours. We immediately conclude that because they have rejected our opinion they have rejected the truth. Our only course then is to disfellowship them as believers in and pro-claimers of false doctrines. But all the while the problem is not a false doctrine being believed and practiced, but only an opinion — an opinion which differs from ours but an opinion still.

If we are to ever be the united people God expects His people to be, we must not only recognize the difference between faith and opinion, but also the liberty of opinion. It is not wrong to have and to hold an opinion as private property so long as that opinion is not permitted to get in the way of obedience to the will of God. What the Bible says we must believe . . . and do. Belief of Scriptural testimony is faith. On unrevealed matters, we may all have an opinion (and our opinions may differ), but we must not try to force our opinion on others.

## STRANGE BUT TRUE

The less a man knows about the issues being discussed the more cocksure he is in his conclusions and the more dogmatic and in-

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tolerant he becomes with those who differ with him; the more he knows the more he sees the force of the arguments on the other side and thus the more doubts he has. Cocksurenness, as a substitute for knowledge, reveals one's shallowness; doubts and questions often reveal the depths of one's insights. This is why it has been said that a little learning is a dangerous thing. (Of course we are speaking here of things not clearly revealed in the Scriptures. When a thing is revealed in the Scriptures, we can all be sure of that — it will be the most certain thing in the universe. But when things are not clearly revealed in the word of God, doubts and questions may be more of a virtue than a vice.)

## THE POWER OF LOVE

To love and to be loved are needs created by God in every human being, a need that no one ever outgrows. No one has gone so far down the lonely road of sin, degradation, and selfishness that he no longer needs love . . . and needs to love. But unfortunately the farther away from God one goes the more unlovely and unlovable he becomes, and the more unlovely he becomes the more lonely he is and the more his whole being cries out for love. And herein lies one of the greatest challenges of Christianity. We are to love all men, regardless of how much they may resist or deny the need of love, how low they may fall, or how unlovely they may become. Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matt. 5:44.) But we are to do more than just say that we love; we must show our love by our attitude, words, and conduct — that is, our love must be expressed in action. John says, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18.)

Lynette Fromme, one of the girls in the cruel gang of Charles Manson and the one who attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford in Sacramento, Calif., is reported to have said that she was sitting on a curb in Venice, Calif., when Manson came along and recruited her into his "family."

Why did she follow such a lust-crazed criminal? In her own words, she said, "A beaten dog will follow anyone who loves it." While this is generally true, with both dogs and humans, it is not always so. There are exceptions to the rule. But how much different the life of Lynette Fromme might have been had some Christian come along at that time (assuming that she really would have followed anyone who showed her love) and loved her with the love of God in Christ Jesus! Could love have drawn her to a life of purity instead of promiscuity? We may never know, but we certainly should not try to excuse ourselves from having never tried. It is too late for her but how about the millions of other young people who may be sitting where she sat? Will we extend our love to them or wait for another such as Manson to come along and lead them into a life of ruin?

We can never know whether love will lead a person to salvation until we give it a try. But when we stop and think about it, we have no choice in the matter (if we are to please our Master). He has commanded us to love (Matt. 5:44) and His love for us and others (Rom. 5:8) ought to be a motive powerful enough to send us out to love all others . . . even the most unlovely!

## WHAT SHALL HE DO?

People are funny (or so said a radio program many years ago). It seems that we are more concerned about the life, conduct, duty, and destiny of others than we are in our own. It is so easy for us to know **their** duty but we are not much interested in **our** own. We can tell them what they must do to be saved but we rarely ask, "What must I do?"

We see that the way **they** live is wrong but refuse to see that we are living in the self-same way (Rom. 2:1).

We blame **them** for their forms of entertainment, their gossip, their permissive ways, etc., but **we** go on our own way seemingly without giving a thought to the consequences of our acts.

We urge upon **them** the necessity of faithfulness (Rev. 2:10) but rarely consider **our** own neglect (Heb. 2:1-4).

We are unable to see how **they** can face

eternity in their lost condition but turn right around and excuse **ourselves** by saying we are going to prepare to meet God someday, when the time is convenient.

We warn **them** of the danger of material things while we spend the vast majority of **our** time accumulating more and more material things (many of them contributing little or nothing to a happy and useful life).

Why do we not apply the same standards to ourselves as we do to others? We do not know. But one thing we do know. Jesus gave the solution. In His last meeting with His disciples (according to John's record) before He ascended back to take His seat on the right hand of God, Peter, seeing one Jesus loved (probably John) leaning on His breast asked, "And what shall this man

do?" (John 21:21.) That's our question. But notice how Jesus responded: "Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow me." (John 21:22.) Or as the NIV renders it, "What is that to you? You must follow me." To follow Jesus **ourselves** is our primary obligation.

It is certainly good, even necessary, to be concerned about others, but we must not use that concern as a cloak to cover our own neglect. Regardless of what others do, feel, or think, whether it be good or bad, we must follow Christ. And only when we are concerned enough about ourselves and our own conduct to follow Him are we in position to offer help, hope, and encouragement to others.

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## The Foundation Of Faith (Part 4)

**Jim Gardner, New Haven, CT**

It is characteristic of modern "faith healers" that they have favorite miracles to perform. Some specialize in cancer, while others more modestly concentrate on headaches. One television evangelist has cured so many people of having one leg longer than the other that one wonders how the American pants industry could have prospered without him. More commonly, self-proclaimed miracle workers confine themselves to a certain range of wonders, within which they profess to give healing to all the sick. I see no reason why men with the power of God should be limited in such an arbitrary way, nor why they should station guards at the entrance to their meetings to keep out sufferers with inconveniently real illnesses. The miracles they claim are notable, but even more notable are the miracles they do not dare even to claim, because the falsehood of such a claim would be too blatantly obvious.

Jesus did not labor under any such restrictions, but extended his healing power to the whole range of human infirmities. The blind man and the leper, the paralytic and the man with the withered arm, were all welcome patients to a doctor who never

failed. The more serious the affliction, the more it excited his compassion; the more obvious, certain, and extreme its symptoms, the more its healing served his great purpose. The magicians of Egypt mimicked, for a time, the miracles that Moses worked; but when Moses began to work wonders that no trick or device could resemble, even in miniature, the magicians were forced to confess that here was the finger of God. In the same way, the clearest proofs of Jesus' divinity center around His assertion of claims that liars dare not make, backed up by His performance of acts that fakers dare not attempt.

This is not to say that all modern faith healing is fakery, any more than all falsehood is a deliberate lie. Millions of people sincerely believe in faith healing, thousands confidently assert that they have themselves been miraculously healed, and doubtless some of the would-be healers believe that they are doing good.

This widespread faith comes in part from the fact that they do make many people feel better. Medical authorities report that perhaps half of all people who visit their doctors with a complaint of illness actually have nothing physically wrong with them.



Their problems are purely psychosomatic, and should a doctor or anyone else manage to convince them that they had been healed, then they would feel perfectly fine. Imaginary diseases can be cured by imaginary means. The pain is quite real, though unconnected to any physical cause, and release from that pain can seem miraculous to the sufferer, all the more so if doctors have been unable to help. After all, it is not much comfort for someone suffering from chronic headaches to be told that it is all in his head. The faith healer removes the pain by answering the false claim of physical illness with a false claim to miraculous power. Ironically, therefore, faith healers can cure people in a way that Jesus could not, because Jesus would have been unwilling to agree with the patient's falsehood in order to take away his pain.

Diseases that are not wholly psychosomatic are yet strongly affected by mental state. For reasons unknown, the symptoms of multiple sclerosis, for example, vary widely with the emotions of the patient. Depression seems generally to worsen the effects of illness, and doctors often speak of the importance of the will to live. To precisely the

extent that emotions affect physical health, faith healers can genuinely heal.

But compare this kind of healing to what Jesus did. Allowing for the greatest conceivable influence by His personality on the emotions of those who met Him, most of His miracles remain utterly inexplicable. No one has ever instantly recovered from advanced leprosy by the power of positive thinking. No one ever thought for himself a new arm. Several years ago, a member of a Pentecostal church in Tennessee attempted to think himself dead. He failed; but, had he succeeded, it is a dead certainty he would have been unable to think himself alive again. One cannot raise the dead by the force of a pleasant personality. It is equally impossible to imagine what arts of persuasion could have convinced a storm to cease, or caused the law of gravity to suspend its operation while Jesus walked on the waves.

Against the plain force of these considerations, some still insist that the miracles of Jesus are some form of psychic phenomena, perhaps a mass hypnotism that made all the sailors feel so calm in the storm as no longer to note its existence, that convinced the hungry they had been fed, and the bereaved that their loved ones had returned. There is no logical, historical, or scientific basis for this belief. If the testimony of others, and by implication the testimony of our own senses, can be thus arbitrarily dismissed as illusion, then of course neither the truth of Christianity nor of anything else can ever be known. Testimony should be weighed with a knowledge of how often witnesses are wrong, but it must be weighed. We should reason with a humble awareness of our tendency to deceive ourselves, but we must reason. To those who refuse to reason, who have given up the search for truth and the business of living, the gospel has nothing to say.

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# Restoration: A Return To The Old Paths

Bill Dorriety, Winston-Salem, NC

The plea for restoration is not new, nor is it limited to the religious world. Many express their desire for restoration of "better times" by wishing for a return to the "good old days." In Old Testament times, kings like Hezekiah and Josiah came to power when Israel had been led away from God and into corruption. Their idea of restoration was for the kingdom to regain its former glory (2 Kings 18:22). Prophets like Ezekiel and Jeremiah cried out to a people who had drifted far away from God and needed to restore the rule of God's commandments over their lives (Ez. 40:48). Jeremiah expressed it this way: **"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein."** (Jer. 6:16.)

Eighteenth century America was filled with numerous denominational ways in which men could, and did, follow. However, there were a number of great men of conviction and courage who realized the need for the restoration of New Testament truth. These men came from many walks of life and from many different religious backgrounds. Even though many of them had never met, they had the love of truth in common and they committed themselves to restoring the New Testament order of things. They read the words of Jesus, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6), and recognized only the authority of Jesus (Matt. 28:18). They concluded, with Paul, that the gospel is complete (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and God's only saving power for fallen man (Rom. 1:16). The common plea was, accept "the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven"; return to the "old paths."

Will restoration work? Is it a valid plea today? A number of years ago, an archaeological team working in Egypt, uncovered in the tomb of an Egyptian king some grains of wheat that were over two thousand years old. Experimentally, some of the grains were planted, and they **grew** and **produced** . . . wheat! Even though

over two thousand years old, the seed produced after its own kind. Long before this experiment, early restorers reasoned that if spiritual seed (the word of God, Luke 8:11) was planted, it would produce New Testament Christianity duplicating exactly that of the days of the apostles. This foundation thought of Restoration pioneers was reasonable and practical then and is a valid concept for all who will commit themselves to the authority of the Bible, rather than human creeds.

James O'Kelly was a Methodist, but he was not dedicated to the principles of methodism. He was dedicated to the New Testament. Elias Smith and Abner Jones were Baptists, but their commitment was to the New Testament rather than Baptist creeds. Presbyterian Barton W. Stone refused to accept that denomination's Confession of Faith without the reservation, "I do as far as I see it consistent with the Word of God." Thomas and Alexander Campbell came to this country from Scotland and Ireland, burning with zeal for a return to the Bible and restoration of New Testament Christianity. These and other men, standing on the Bible alone, restudied many of their former denominational beliefs and practices. When they found former positions unscriptural, they abandoned them immediately. Historians have summarized basic principles of the Restoration Movement as follows:

1. The acknowledgement of the New Testament Scriptures as the only authoritative rule of faith and practice for the Christian.
2. A recognition of Christ as the sole and sovereign head of the church.
3. Renunciation of all human creeds as devisive and acceptance of the Scriptures as the only basis for unity.
4. The restoration of the apostolic church with the simplicity of its organization as revealed in the New Testament.
5. The restoration of the autonomy of the local congregation.

Honest students readily observe that no new sect, or denomination, was intended or established! The spirit of this movement

was to restore New Testament authority in all matters of faith and practice. Even the slogans adopted by restoration leaders show their worthy goal: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." "No book but the

Bible; no creed but Christ; no name but the divine name." "In faith, unity; in opinions, liberty; and in all things, charity." Let us continue our efforts to restore God's word as supreme authority in our lives today.

## The High Cost Of Repentance

**Michael R. Mobley, Mooresville, NC**

This story is told of artful Eddie O'Hare. He was a gangster lawyer for the late Al Copone. One day he decided to go straight, correct his life, change his way of living. Though it cost him his life, it is said that he helped to bring down to and end the evil of Al Copone. He cleansed his own name.

Paul also repented of his life of unbelief in Jesus Christ. He cleansed his name (which was changed from Saul to Paul) when he corrected his life and turned it around at the acceptance of truth.

Repentance means to change one's will, mind. In effect, it is to change one's life. Conversion is the work of repentance: To convert from the sinner's way of life to the righteous, holy way of doing things (Acts 3:19), to convert from worldliness to godliness (Rom. 12:1-2). It is the change of the penitent's thoughts, actions, character, and even feelings according to the guidance of God's holy word (Titus 2:11-14).

Jesus commands our repentance for our own sakes: "I tell you, Nay; but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3.) No one is justified in his sin. If we do not correct our lives, leave sin out and fill them with Christ, we will suffer the eternal separation from God who is love and life. We will perish in an endless dying torment from which there will be no escape! This is the high cost of not repenting of sin.

But repentance brings us to eternal life lived with God. "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11:8.) And repentance bears a cost of its own (2 Tim. 3:12). It is not the giving up of sin; that is the command, the very nature of repentance. The high cost of repentance is the sufferings that will come because we have given our lives to change: rejection, loneliness, temptation, persecutions, pain, and inner struggle.

Repentance is commanded of everyone everywhere (Acts 17:30). Before we can be saved from the guilt of our sins in baptisms, we must first give up those sins. And also true in the daily life of the Christian. What good would it be for God to forgive us of sin that we have not ceased to commit? The penitent heart in man is a condition that must exist before baptism and during our Christian lives if God is to be just in His forgiveness of sin. He will not condone any sin (1 John 1:7-10), no matter who we are.

The church is Christ's body of those called out of sin and called into godly living. Let us examine our lives. Are there those in the church living as though they belong out of it? Are there those out of the church who want to belong to Christ's saved body? Then repentance is the command of God to be obeyed by all. Baptism is the further command to be obeyed by those outside the saved body (Acts 2:28).



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# "Faith" And "Works"

David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

The words "faith" and "works" are both significant and frequent terms in New Testament usage as well as in modern religious discussions. A grasp of the proper application of these words is essential to understanding the Biblical plan of redemption.

Extremes in the religious world have led some to assume that salvation can be earned by a sufficient number and kind of works. Many others, on the other hand, insist that works have nothing at all to do with salvation: it is by "faith alone." This latter view has resulted in denial of the place of baptism in the plan of salvation, which, it is argued, is a "work" and cannot be essential. (See Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; and 1 Pet. 3:21.)

The emphasis of the Scriptures, however, is that while **salvation is only by faith**, it is **not by faith only**. Faith implies trust and reliance in God and His plan for redemption. It means that one can rely upon absolutely no other source or means for salvation. Passages such as Romans 1:17; 3:22, 25-28; 4:4-5; 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; and Hebrews 11:6 demonstrate that there is no way to be saved except by faith.

It does not follow, however, from these passages (or any others) that salvation is by "faith only." Instead, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:24.) It is through "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6), which is the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26).

On the other hand, while **salvation is by works**, it is **not because of works**. James stated it plainly, "by works a man is justified." The necessity of doing the works that are commanded is consistently shown throughout Scripture. (See Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; Phil. 2:12; and Rom. 6:27-28.)

How, though, does this harmonize with the numerous passages which emphasize

that works are excluded? For example, Ephesians 2:9 says, "not of works" and Romans 11:6 forcefully says, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." But this is not a contradiction of the passages that show the necessity of works. Rather it is an explanation that the works we do — though essential as obedience — are not designed to be, nor sufficient to be, the source of our salvation. All the works one might ever do could never merit forgiveness of one single sin.

This principle is exemplified in Titus 3:5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." One of the things by which we are saved is "the washing of regeneration," an obvious reference to baptism. (See John 3:5; Eph. 5:26; Acts 22:16; and 1 Pet. 3:21.) But while we are saved by this "washing," it is not **because** of baptism that we are saved. Rather we are saved **because of His mercy**. God's plan obligates us to obey in baptism; but our obedience in baptism (or anything else) does not obligate God to save us. Instead He saves us because of His mercy and grace.

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# Take Time To Be Holy

Sara Kemp, Stanley, NC

*Take time to be holy  
Speak oft with thy Lord.  
Abide in Him always,  
And feed on His Word.*

How familiar the words of this song are to all of us. Yet how often we get so caught up in the everyday cares of being a housewife and mother and the familiar words become meaningless. Our days can be so full and active with cooking, shopping, cleaning and the cares of our families that we soon find our own spirituality suffering.

2 Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God. . . ." If we neglect to study the Bible on a daily basis, we soon find that frequent Bible study does not appeal to us any more.

In 1 Thess. 5:17 we read, "Pray without ceasing." If we only pray occasionally, we soon find that we do not want to pray and feel no need to talk with our heavenly Father.

When we remove ourselves from the source of strength (God), our spirituality dies. We must "take time to be holy" because there will not be time left over. A spiritual life is a consecrated life but consecration is a state of heart. Webster defines consecrated as, "to set apart as holy, devote to religious service, to make or declare sacred."

We must set aside time each day for prayer and study. Every Christian wife and mother needs to spend time each day with the Lord. If we fail to stay close to God on a daily basis, we will soon find that spiritual things become less and less important.

A consecrated, spiritual life prepares us inwardly for coping with life on a day-to-day basis. Prayer and an ever-developing spiritual life can help us deal effectively with daily living.

Strength for today is all we need. Tomorrow is still only a promise. Yesterday is gone forever.

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# Let's Get Into The People Business

John D. White, Sr., Union, SC

"True wisdom lies in gathering the precious things provided by each day as it goes by." "There are few dark days for those who have learned to spread sunshine."

How especially warm, tender, caring, compassionate and encouraging it is to see people involved in people-business. When others will take time to alleviate the problems of their fellow-people. Today, as we worry and fret about jobs and whether or not we are going to take our usual vacations, perhaps it would be well if we would stop for a moment and answer the question: "What are we living for?" How wonderful it is when we begin to live for other people. When our business is the business of helping to improve the lives of people, then we are beginning to understand wisdom.

In the New Testament we read about a wonderful man who was in the people-business. Probably you never knew him by his real name, "Josés" (Acts 4:36). The apostles surnamed him Barnabas. Certainly, his surname was well deserved as is seen by his nature and character. **Barnabas was an encourager.** Barnabas was in the people-business! The world in which we live is always a better place for having had people like Barnabas to work with. Truly, these people actively seek ways in which to alleviate the pain, grief, suffering and burdens of others around them. They are, indeed, a pleasure to be around.

Consider with me some qualities and/or character traits which surely identify the character of Barnabas:

1. **Always observant of the needs of others.** Like Paul who considered himself a servant to all of mankind (Rom. 1:14). Like

Jesus who came to serve others (Matt. 20:28).

**2. Always practicing thoughtfulness toward the needs of others.** Always being concerned with their opinions, their desires, their feelings and their conclusions. Like Jesus, who was so moved with those who never knew Him (Matt. 9:36) and who taught the **Law of Psychological Reciprocity** (i.e., the golden rule, Matt. 7:12). How we treat others is how they will treat us.

**3. Praising others because he was genuinely concerned over them, and wanted to bring out their positive traits.** A totally selfless person, like Paul who stated in Phil. 2:3, "Esteem others better than yourself."

**4. Always showing a positive interest in people.** Desired greatness for them as this would even help others in whom they would come into contact with. Listening to others would certainly be one of his strong characteristics. People of today need people who will take time to **listen**. Truly, Barnabas was a man who knew joy through service to others. Obviously, he understood God's desire for all of His people to be filled with joy. (1 John 1:4).

**5. Practiced being open-minded and friendliness.** Like Jesus who was a friend to the unfriendly (Luke 7:34). Like the writer of Proverbs, "A person who desires friends will be friendly" (Prov. 18:24).

**6. Would have realized the value of calling people by their names.** The apostle John asked for his friends to be greeted by name. Moses and Elijah at the Mount of Transfiguration were referred to by name, even

though they had been physically dead for hundreds of years. According to Acts 4:12 there is no other name under heaven whereby men can be saved, than the name of **Jesus**. At the name of Jesus every knee should bow (Phil. 2:10).

**7. Obviously, he would have used excellent speech as this would reflect on his total character.** He would have realized that no one has to resort to profanity to express themselves (Eph. 4:29). Proverbs 17:7 emphasizes that the speech of a godly person is different. Speaking, by any Christian, should always be carefully thought out (1 Pet. 4:11).

Obviously, Barnabas was in the people-business, his wisdom shining brightly in the lives of others.

Today, give us men like Barnabas. Give us men who are in the people-business. Today, let us seek what the writer of Proverbs 4:5 talks about: "Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth."

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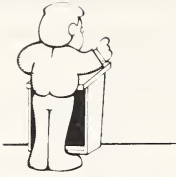
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# Carolina Pulpit

Edited by  
Johnny Melton



## Biographical Sketch



**David Vaughn**

In June 1980, David and Caroline Vaughn and their three children moved to Burlington, N.C., to work with the Lord's people in that city. They moved from Portageville, Missouri, where they lived for the previous three years.

David was born in Tennessee. He worked eighteen years for Ralston Purina Company

in Battle Creek, Mich. In Battle Creek he met his wife, Caroline. It was through her efforts that he became a Christian in November 1958.

In August 1975 the Vaughns sold their house and moved to Dallas, Texas, where he attended Preston Road School of Preaching, graduating in 1977.

They have three children: Mike, a junior at Harding University; Lori, a freshman at Harding University; and Mark, a seventh-grade student.

## Sermon

# Things Precious To Peter

**David Vaughn, Burlington, NC**

1. What do you consider to be the single most important thing in your life? What is valued most reveals so much about the individual. Not everyone will value the same thing. One's junk often becomes another's treasure.

2. Let us read what Peter said was precious in his life. (1) 1 Pet. 1:7, genuine faith; (2) 1 Pet. 1:19, blood of Christ; (3) 2 Pet. 1:4, promises of God.

3. Peter did not always consider these things as being precious (Matt. 26:31ff). He one time denied knowing Jesus (Matt. 26:69ff).

4. After the resurrection of Jesus, Peter's attitude changed. He boldly proclaimed the gospel — even when persecuted (Acts, chs. 2-5). He could lie down and sleep when facing death (Acts 12) because he now realized what was really precious. His faith enabled him to have this serenity. This is why he regarded faith as precious.

I. A Genuine Proven Faith (1 Pet. 1:7).

A. Faith is the foundation of the Christian life. It is the hub — the primary re-

sponse. This precious faith is to permeate every aspect of the Christian life. Our salvation depends upon it! (1) Without faith no one can be accepted to God (Heb. 11:6). Israel failed because of her unbelief (Heb. 3). (2) Faith is more than just acknowledging the name of the Lord (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 3:18-19).

B. A genuine proven faith is one that has been tried by the fiery trials of temptation (1 Pet. 4:12-13). (1) Our faith, when it carries us through the difficult times, is, according to Peter, more precious than gold. Augustine said, "In the fiery oven the straw burns but the gold is purified." (2) The refining fires of temptation help to cleanse us of pride and self-reliance, helping us to know our real strength comes from the Lord. (3) The boxcars of a train go because they are hooked to a powerful engine. Our faith is that which enables us to hold on to our strength — Jesus the Christ. (4) How do we react to our trials? Does our faith enable us to overcome evil or are we overcome of evil? (Rom. 12:21).

II. The Blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).

A. Man guilty of sin, lost in sin, had to be ransomed from sin. Jesus came to do that (Matt. 20:28). Indeed, His blood did that which neither silver, gold, nor the works of man could ever do — cleanse us from our sins (Rev. 1:5-6).

B. This cleansing was costly (1 Cor. 6:20). We therefore belong to Christ and it is He whom we are to serve (Rom. 6:16).

C. The blood of Christ is continually cleansing us of our sins as we do serve Him (1 John 1:7-10).

D. Rev. 7:13-17 reveals the result of being cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

E. Laundries have fluids that will remove all types of stain. The human soul, however, can be cleansed only by the blood of Jesus.

III. The Promises of God are Precious (2 Pet. 1:4).

A. When looking at a promise we consider: (1) The value of what is promised. (2)

The character of the one who made the promise. (3) The conditions that are attached to the promise.

B. When we consider the wonderful promises of God, we know He cannot fail on what He has promised.

C. His promises are such that the most feeble individual can fulfill the conditions of the promise.

D. Indeed, they are precious: peace, contentment, joy while on this earth; an eternal home in heaven with the redeemed in the future.

E. A printer in a large eastern city had an impressive trademark on all packages that were sent out. The trademark was a large circle and inside the circle the words "I never disappoint." Our Lord never disappoints. "Whosoever will" means you and me! What is precious in your life?

Conclusion:

Tell how to be saved.

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#### ILLUSTRATED EXPOSITIONS

## Salvation In The Old Testament?

Howard Winters, W. Jefferson, NC

### The Principle

The question is often raised, "Were the people who lived under the Old Testament system saved?" The answer depends upon whether one means currently or ultimately. But most of those who ask this question usually mean, "Were they literally and actually saved then and that before and without the death of Christ?" To answer negatively (as I am forced to do) raises the question of the power of God. But can God save any one He pleases upon any condition (or with no conditions at all) at will? Does salvation depend wholly upon the power of God to save. If so, then why does He not save all: for it is not His will that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9). On the other hand, to answer positively makes the death of Christ unnecessary. If God could and in reality did save the sinner under the Old Testament system without the death of Christ, then why did He not continue to save without it? Why did Christ die?

There is more to the sin problem than

most have ever seen. God's eternal word is at stake. He told the first pair, in essence, "The day you sin is the day you die" (Gen. 2:17-18). They sinned (Gen. 3:1-7). It was therefore inevitable that the penalty of death be passed upon them. But this death was more than physical death — it was separation from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 6:23). Thus God's word said that the sinner must die. If the death penalty is lifted, if the sinner is saved from death, God's word is made void. Paul clearly stated this problem when he said, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.) God therefore cannot be just and justify the sinner without the penalty being paid. The solution to this profound problem is found in Christ. He died in man's stead (Heb. 9:26-28; 2 Cor. 5:21). His death is accepted by God as the penalty of sin; the sinner can thus be freed from death. This simply means that without the death of Christ, no one could be saved. Those under the Old Testament were ultimately saved by looking

forward to the death of Christ just as those under the New Testament are saved by looking back to it. But no one was saved in the absolute sense until the death of Christ paid the penalty of sin.

### **The Passage**

Paul states this principle clearly and concisely in the following manner: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through forbearance of God." (Rom. 3:25.)

### **The Exposition**

**Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation** — a sacrifice of atonement (NIV) or a covering for sins. His blood is the ransom price (Matt. 20:28). **Through faith in his blood**, — blood represents life (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11) and the blood of Christ (the sacrifice of His life) pays man's sin debt. His life was given so that we might live. The benefits of His blood is appropriated to our sins through faith and obedience. **To declare his righteousness** — He did this to demonstrate his justice (NIV). **For the remission of sins past, through the forbearance of God.** — Because of his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished (NIV) — because of the passing over of sins done aforehand (ASV). This irrefutably shows that without the shedding of Christ's blood no one, past, present, or future, could be saved from sin. Those under the Old Testament system offered animal sacrifice, typical of the death of Christ, as a partial or temporary measure until the promised seed should come to make the ultimate sacrifice, which would finally and completely purge from sin. The blood of animals could not take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4; 9:11-22), then, now, or ever. It only pointed forward to the sacrifice which would be truly efficacious. If sins could have been forgiven without the death of Christ, then Christ died in vain — His death was not a necessity. But the fact is, no sins were finally or absolutely forgiven until Christ died. His blood flowed backward (to all those who had obeyed God's plan) as well as forward. Nothing, absolutely

nothing, can atone for sins, nothing can pay man's sin debt, but the blood of Christ. Of course those who trusted God and did His will under the Old Testament had the promise of forgiveness, but it was in promise rather than in fact. But forgiveness was as sure as God's promises.

### **The Illustration**

To illustrate how God could forgive sins in promise but not in actual fact, let me tell you about a personal experience I had some years ago. While I lived in a distant city (about 400 miles away) I paid a visit to my parents. While there, two tires burst on my car. There was no way they could be fixed. I would therefore have to purchase two new ones. But I neither had the money with me to do so nor did I have it in the bank back home. I revealed my dilemma to a nearby service station manager. He showed some sympathy with me. I then made him a proposition: if he would trust me I would write him a check for the tires and the first thing on the following Monday morning after I arrived home I would deposit enough in the bank to cover it. He agreed to this. I got my tires, gave him the check, and went on my way. He held my check until the next Monday, at which time I made the deposit. Now he had a check with no money in the bank to cover it, but he knew that it was just as good as my promise. If I kept my word he would get his money. He had the payment in his hand in promise, although he would not actually get it until the specified time. So it was with God and His people in the Old Testament. He promised them that if they would obey His laws He would eventually provide them the ultimate means of forgiveness. Romans 3:25 shows that those who believed Him were rewarded with the remission of their sins. They had received remission in promise during Old Testament times but when Christ died they received it in reality.

### **Conclusion**

The people in the Old Testament who did God's will were saved, but their salvation was on the basis of promise until Christ died. He died for them as well as for us; His death was as necessary for them as for us. Thus their sin debt was not paid until the



death of Christ, and their salvation was not absolute until His blood was shed. Without

the shedding of His blood there is no remission of sins (cf. Heb. 9:22).

## THOUGHTS TO PONDER

# The Second Coming Of Christ

Henry L. Fuhry, Asheville, NC

The resurrection of Jesus from the tomb could have no personal meaning for the Christian unless He comes again to claim His own. The New Testament is clear that God loved mankind so much that He sent His Son to earth to live among men in order to defeat evil and death and to establish His church, a church of penitent baptized believers. The purpose being that the Christians should live their lives of love and service to prepare them to be with God. A new and last age of man was inaugurated by Christ which will end in God's appointed time. Christians are citizens of the kingdom of heaven on earth; and in the age to come, they will become citizens of the eternal kingdom. The second advent becomes necessary in the light of His first coming. He was distrusted and hated by the Sadducees and Pharisees who were instrumental in nailing Him to the cross. God proved them wrong by raising Him from the tomb. All the forces of evil were powerless to destroy Him. Christ, who lived among us, humbly and beautifully, will return as the Son of God, the Lord of lords, and the King of kings who will call the whole of mankind together in judgment. And step by step, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John carry us to the cross and the tomb, and the resurrection. Luke describes His ascension and tells of Jesus' promise to return to claim His own (Acts 1:11). The New Testament is emphatic that He is coming again, but the time He is to come is not revealed. Mark says "but of that day and hour knoweth no man" (Mark 13). Acts 1:7 tells us, "It is not for us to know the time and day." Modern Christians should be confident in their faith that the time of the second coming is appointed of God, and we need await that inevitable day.

**The Christian Hope Misunderstood (1 Thess. 4:13-15).** The Christians had been

taught to expect Christ's return, so when some of them died before His return, those that were living were quite upset. "Others . . . who have no hope" refers to all those outside of Christ, those for whom death is still the final enemy. Christians have hope for the future while the unbeliever has no hope. There is always a sadness of parting. Of course, a Christian is sorrowful when a loved one dies, but if the loved one is a Christian and true follower of Christ, then the sorrow should not be based on a lack of hope for the future. For he has the hope of the resurrection and reunion. The coming of Jesus will not be just for those Christians who happen to be alive then. God's resurrection power will be extended to those who have died. In fact, Paul says, "When the Lord comes, those who are alive will not have any precedence over those who have died." There will be no advantage either way. If a man has lived in Christ and died in Christ, even if he is dead he is still in Christ and will rise in Christ. This means that between Jesus Christ and the man who loves Him there is a relationship which nothing can break. It is a relationship independent of time; a relationship which overpasses death. Nothing in life or in death can separate him from Christ if he has been true to Him in the manner taught in the New Testament.

**The Christian Hope Affirmed (1 Thess. 4:16-18).** The history of the church is dotted with individuals and groups who have tried to predict the exact time of Christ's return. Paul does not reveal the answer to the time question. He gives a broad picture: Jesus Himself will descend from heaven (1) "with a cry of command"; (2) "with the archangel's call"; (3) "with the sound of the trumpet of God." Those who are living when Christ returns shall be caught up with those who have been raised from the dead. Those who have died in Christ will arise

first and those who are alive in Christ will meet the Lord in the air. Many have espoused a belief that there will be a second reign of Christ on earth for 1000 years (Rev. 20). This belief, however, defies all other teaching found in the New Testament. Christ Himself said His kingdom was not of this world (this is what the Jews expected — an earthly king). This belief is in direct conflict with Paul's teaching, who says, "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:17.) When one thinks about the so-called earthly millennial reign of Christ with deep meditation and reasoning it defies the whole of Christianity because it is saying that all will have a second chance. Nowhere in the teaching of Christ, or the writers of the New Testament who were inspired to write what they wrote by our Lord, is there any indication other than we must accept Christ while we live because our salvation or non-salvation is sealed when we die a physical death. Further when you think about it more, a so-called second chance for humans defeats the whole significance of becoming a Christian and living for Christ. Why not just go ahead and do as we want to do now? Live it up! We are going to get another chance then. This defies reason. Paul further tells the Thessalonians not to worry about trying to figure out a precise timetable. The reason is "the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night," that is, when people least expect it. There will be a surprising element about it. No one will be able to determine His coming date in advance! This takes care of the thinking of many to wait as long as they can, with the thought of eventually becoming Christians. Deathbed repentance is like playing Russian roulette. If a Christian lives always as he should "that day" can come anytime and always find him ready. The Christian must never be asleep spiritually and morally. Most of the world cares little what God is doing in the world. The duty of Christians is to live in watchful expectation of that great event. This means fulfilling life's responsibilities in the understanding that the best way to be

ready for the coming Lord is to be engaged in His service. There are certain things that cannot be left until the last moment. It is too late to prepare for an examination when the test paper is before you. It is too late to make the house secure when it has already been broken into. Some things have to be done in time. The man who has lived all his life with Christ is never unprepared to enter the nearer presence of Christ.

**Brotherly Love (1 Thess. 4:1-12).** "But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I think we have a great need to understand the meaning of love and how Christians must possess it, dispense it, live with it, and rejoice in it. If we refer to 1 Cor. 13:13 we find the statement, "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Let us approach this majestic statement from the standpoint of economics (1) Do I need it? (2) Will it work? (3) How long will it last? **Do I need it?** Americans are bankrupt buying things they do not need! Someone has observed, "Americans spend money they don't have, to buy things they don't need, to fool people they don't like." **Will it work?** Why buy things that do not work? Yet advertising sells the impossible, the unworkable. Things must fail when things will not work. Too many have traded God for gimmicks and gadgets. **How long will it last?** We live in the "disposal age." Literally everything is made to be used but once and thrown away! Things are made this day and age with "built in" obsolescence.

**Do we need love?** Paul answers yes! (1) He first enters into preaching abilities. Moderns idolize abilities; we worship those with unusual talent. Paul affirms that the greatest of talent is rendered worthless without love. An eloquent sermon which moves audiences can still indict the speaker. How many congregations select preachers by the standard of love? Are not most hired from eloquence, personality, being well-known throughout the brotherhood, or salary involved? Brethren usually think they appreciate sermons on love. But real "love sermons" are hard! We should evaluate ourselves. Where do we stand? Paul enters

the benevolent field but he emphasizes that benevolence without love is void. He even says one can lose his life but if he has not love there is no profit. Do we need love? You know it!

**Will love work?** Paul answers this question first in the negative. "Love suffers long." Brethren have often shocked the outside world with meanness. Sometimes we do not even practice common courtesy. The little girl prayed appropriately, "Make bad people good and good people nice." There are Christian husbands and wives in the church that have not told each other that they love them for years! Not that they do not, but because they consider such confessions of love as weak and soft! Or they do not tell of their love out of negligence. We need to tell each other more often, "I love you." Not only our mates, but fellow Christians as well, and even our neighbors, friends, our fellowmen in general. Love suffers long! Love envies not! Are you jealous of your children's high grades or athletic ability? Of course not! You rejoice with those you love! Envy or jealousy is merely an absence of love! Love boasts not! Jesus said in Matthew 6 that men would desire the applause of others. He also concluded, "they have their reward." Love is not pushy or selfish; love does not grasp. Love is not forward, rude, nor crude. Love is thoughtful and considerate. Love is unselfish. The King James translation has been criticized for translating love with the word "charity." But a lesson can be learned here! All of us are on charity. We have our own idiosyncrasies and peculiarities which make us at times unlovable, yes even intolerable. Our closest people love us "in spite of ourselves." This places all of us on charity. Also love works positively, "Love beareth all things." That is not another negative. Paul had already suggested that love endured and suffered. This statement then is positive. Who "bears" the work program? Who gives? Who visits? Who grows in Christ? Why, those who love! Love is dependable, love is responsible, and love is strong. When budgets are presented to the congregation, it is not a question of "Is the money here?" but "Is love here?" Yet, you and I have heard members of the

church say, when a budget is outlined, "Why, we can't raise that kind of money," or "This congregation is just a group of poor working people!" Be honest, have we not been guilty of these murmurings? People in love with Jesus bear or share the programs of the church. "Love endureth all things." Love is a heroic believer! One can believe another while not loving him, but one cannot love another and not believe him! We need love in our business meetings. Just about all of us have been in meetings when tempers flared, anger reigned, and arguments ensued! I ask is there love when such situations exist? Programs should be approached boldly, not apologetically; enthusiastically, not indifferently; optimistically, not pessimistically! The early church historian records "How they loved each other." A conclusion to some business meetings is just the opposite!

**How long will love last?** All other things will fail and cease. Hope and faith cannot stand by themselves. Prophecies shall fail; tongues shall cease; knowledge shall vanish away, but love is eternal. Faith and hope are not eternal. Faith will become sight. We walk now by faith — then we shall see Him as He is. Hope will become a reality. In heaven we will have all our hopes made real. But, love will still be love — deeper, higher, broader, and sweeter. Christopher Morley so well said, "If we discovered that we had only five minutes left to say all we wanted to say, every telephone would be occupied by people calling other people to stammer that they love them." Do we need love? Yes! Will love work? Yes! How long will love last? Forever!

In concluding, let us remember (1) There will be a second coming of Christ. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and the living in Christ will be caught up with them to meet Jesus in the air. We are reminded that a future millennial reign of Christ on earth is in direct contradiction to the teaching of Christ and His inspired writers. The book of Revelation is a revelation of God to John on the Island of Patmos. It is written in highly figurative language. It is a book with hidden meanings for matters that are secret or mysterious. To me the really important parts of the book, and those which I can



understand, are those parts dealing with the seven churches pointing out their strengths and their weaknesses. Here we can strengthen ourselves and our congregations if we find any of the weak conditions existing. I am sure there are other understandable truths in the book of Revelation but to me these stand out. (2) We must never let our hope waiver that the things promised by our Lord will not come about. (3) We need to show more love for our brothers in Christ,

our families, friends, and those living outside Christ, because by doing so we have a stronger thrust to draw them unto Christ. (4) Finally, there is not a shred of evidence to show or prove that there will be a second chance for people who have not complied with the requirement of becoming a Christian and who have not lived as Christ directs them to live. If this should be the case, the whole foundation of Christianity is built on sand and it crumbles.



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

**Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC**

### **Baxter Lectureship**

**Nashville, Tenn.** The administration of David Lipscomb College has announced plans for the first Batsell Barrett Baxter Bible Lectureship to be held in memory of the late Bible Department Chairman at Lipscomb. The tentative dates for the lectureship are September 11-14, 1983, and will include the H. Leo Boles Lecture on Preaching.

The Baxter Lectureship is being established in order to allow Lipscomb to make a further contribution to the strength of the church. According to Carl McKelvey, vice-president for campus affairs, the overall goals of the series include "exalting Christ and His church," being "true to the Bible and our heritage," and to stimulate better understanding of biblical truth as well as the application of that truth. The Boles lectures will focus on the role of preaching in the strengthening of the church.

Another proposed feature of the lectureship is a series of "conversations" on unity. These would include position papers read by two participants and a questions and answers session following. The conversations on unity would allow two men to "discuss as Christian gentlemen the need, problems, and ways to restore unity."

### **God Gives the Increase**

**West Monroe, La.** A glance at the "Far and Near" section of the July-August **World Radio News** reveals these

evangelistic successes: In Guatemala an entire family has been converted to Christ, 99 were baptized in a campaign in Honduras, 28 in Kenya have recently obeyed the gospel, and four were baptized in a summer campaign in Sydney, Australia. When the seed is planted, God gives the increase.

### **Telegu New Testament Completed**

**Knoxville, Tenn.** International Bible Translators and the Karns Church of Christ in Knoxville, Tennessee, have announced the completion of the Telegu translation of the New Testament. The translation project was first proposed to the Karns church in 1973 by Stanley Morris and Lynn Yocum and has since been underwritten by the Karns brethren and other area churches. The new translation will soon be tested among the 57 million people of Southeastern India who speak Telegu. International Bible Translators are currently working on other translation projects in an effort to get the Bible to the people of the world in their own languages.

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# Carolina Church News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC

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## NORTH CAROLINA

Recently this writer had the privilege of preaching in a gospel meeting at my "home church" in **Wilkesboro**. This is the place where I was born and "born again." It is encouraging to see the progress that is being made in this area which is so deeply entrenched in denominational traditions. There is an attractive building with attendance close to a hundred. They have two elders, men I have known most of my life, deacons, capable song leaders, teachers, and a loving dedicated membership. Hugh Campbell is the preacher. In recent months the Wilkesboro congregation has been assisting the Taylorsville church, especially in the supplying of a speaker each Sunday. The meeting was well attended with several local visitors at every service. We also enjoyed the presence of brethren from ten other congregations.

**Elkin.** Brothers and sisters from Yadkinville, Wilkesboro, Statesville, Winston-Salem, and Warners Chapel joined with the church at Elkin for a door-to-door campaign in October.

**Statesville.** James Meadows will preach in a meeting at Abilene church November 28-December 3.

**Winston-Salem.** The South Fork congregation has announced plans to financially assist congregations in Gaffney, S.C., and Elkin, N.C., in their evangelistic programs.

**Statesville.** Northview has also increased its mission budget, sending aid to Athens, Greece, Gaffney, S.C., and to the exhibit at the World's Fair.

**Elizabeth City.** Glenn Martin has indicated interest in relocating with a congregation in the Carolinas. He can be con-

tacted at Rt. 4, Box 22, 27909; or 919-338-2708. Brother Martin is sound in the faith and of proven ability.

## N.C. Baptisms

Taylorsville, 1; Hickory, 1; Raleigh, 3; Northview, Statesville, 5; Fayetteville, 3; Gastonia, 1; Burlington, 2; Salisbury, 2; Providence Road, Charlotte, 6. Total: 24.

## S.C. Baptisms

Duncan, 1; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; North Charleston, 1; Greenwood, 1; Edgewood, Greenville, 1; Central, Spartanburg, 2; Union, 2; Northeast, Greenville, 4; Charlotte Ave., Rock Hill, 2. Total: 15.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### Union

**JOHN D. WHITE**, Reporting: The Union church of Christ is marching onward with wonderful enthusiasm, unity, love and diligent work. Our excitement and enthusiasm continue to grow as God continues blessing us so richly. Ours is the most exciting work in the world (that of the Lord Jesus Christ). Our elders continue to lead us in a most wholesome and righteous manner. Everyone appreciates them and they are attempting to prove it by actively following their good leadership. We surely have a lot of good men here in Union.

Recently, we set a goal of 200 for Sunday A.M. worship. Due to the fact that the brethren were of "a mind to work," the goal was not only realized but surpassed. We enjoyed an attendance of 212 on Sunday morning, September 26, 1982. Several Bible studies and correspondence courses have already been realized from this effort.

Our brethren invited literally hundreds and their efforts were rewarded with a goal met and passed. God has indeed blessed their efforts. Even though it was raining, the goal was still achieved. Surely, reaching their goal was only the beginning of many blessings yet to come. How wonderful God is "when we do so little, He does so much."

Psalm 133:1, "Behold, how good and

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SAMP

how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

**Jacksonville, FL**

JIM STUTTS, Reporting: I have just completed over two years of work with the Post St. church. Presently, I am supporting myself in secular work to the end that I might be available for gospel meetings or

workshop meetings. If I may be of service to Carolina congregations, I may be contacted at 10804 General Ave., Jacksonville FL 32220.



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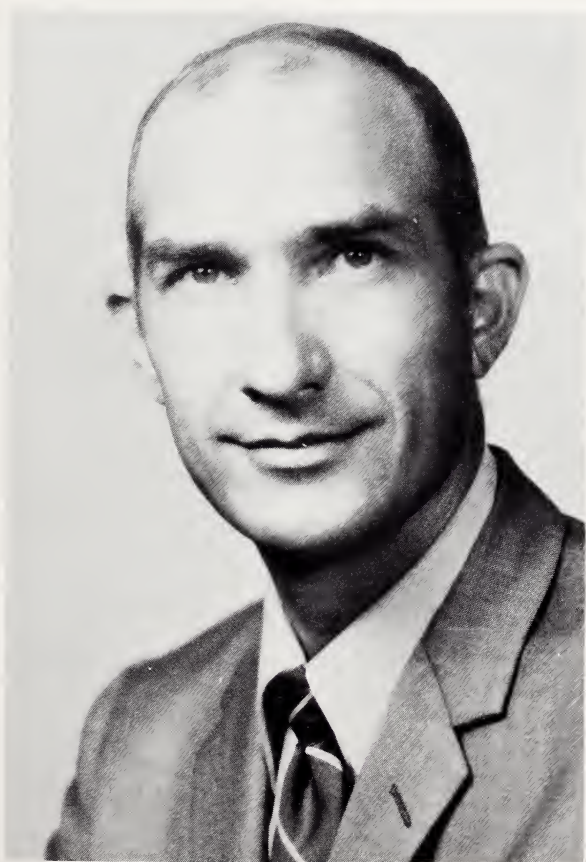
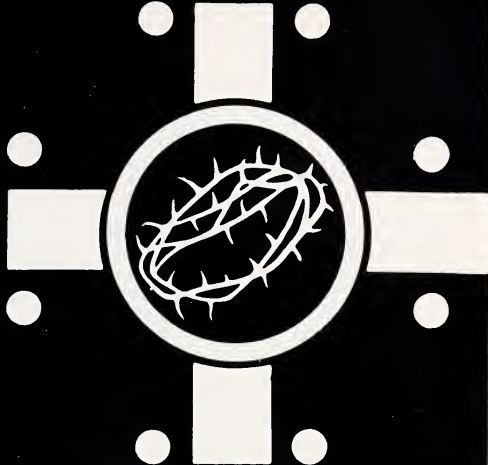
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# CAROLINA CHRISTIAN

OL. 24, NO. 12, DECEMBER 1982



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C292

Hudson Nichols  
Gastonia, NC  
(See page 15)

# editorial

## WHEN TO REFUSE FELLOWSHIP

As our regular readers know, we have spent the vast majority of our editorial space this year in an appeal for brethren to work together in unity, love, and understanding. As a whole, these items have drawn more favorable response, and less unfavorable, than any thing we have ever written for this paper. The amount of good they have done, or the harm they may have caused, is left in the hands of God. With this item on when to refuse fellowship we bring these appeals to a close on a regular basis (if more need to be said, however, we will speak out from time to time).

We are frank to confess that we have composed these items with much fear and trembling. We realized that the grounds upon which we embarked were treacherous. Extreme caution had to be used so that we did not compromise the truth on one hand or become dogmatic for cherished traditions on the other. There must be unity and fellowship in essentials. But there must also be unity in allowing liberty in non-essentials. To compromise on the fundamentals is utterly unthinkable — it would be contrary to everything we believe. Yet to divide over non-essentials, that is, to make non-essentials a matter of faith and fellowship, and thus let them become the cause of division, would be a sin of the first rank against the divine body of Christ. How to teach brethren to strike the proper balance between binding essentials and permitting liberty in non-essentials is a delicate undertaking. To fall into either extreme could be detrimental to the soul. We must be sure that there is no compromise in essentials. But on the other hand we must be sure that we are not binding non-essentials as matters of faith and fellowship.

How then can we know when issues are serious enough over which to break fellowship? We believe the answer to this question is a very simple matter — so simple in fact that the marvel is, not that we have not seen it, but that we have been unable to practice it on a wide scale basis. We should never

compromise essentials, and we should never divide (refuse fellowship) over non-essentials. But how do we determine what is essential and what is non-essential? Easily. It is essential if the salvation of the soul depends upon it; it is non-essential if it does not effect the salvation of the soul. For example, will one be lost if he is not baptized for the remission of his sins? If yes, then you have an essential. To teach and practice the concept that baptism is non-essential is a direct contradiction to what the Bible teaches and is thus a matter serious enough over which to break fellowship. To have fellowship or bid Godspeed to such a doctrine would be to contribute to the damnation of souls. What about instrumental music in Christian worship? Will souls be lost by practicing it? If yes, then there can be no fellowship with those who use it. If no (which some of our brethren are now erroneously saying), then we have no business dividing over it or refusing fellowship to those who use it. If a person can go to heaven practicing the use of instrumental music in Christian worship, what right do we have to disturb his peace and tranquility? Heaven is our goal, and if one can go there using it, why should we object? Is membership in the Lord's church essential

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Howard Winters, Editor; David Pharr, Carolina News Editor; Dennis Conner, Brotherhood News Editor, Johnny Melton, Carolina Pulpit Editor.

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to salvation? If yes, then we cannot have fellowship with those who teach and practice otherwise. Denominationalism is thus a matter serious enough over which to refuse fellowship. We could go through every fundamental of the faith and the answer would be the same. We cannot have fellowship with that which would cause souls to be lost. But it is not over fundamentals that most of our disharmony is experienced; it is in matters non-essential. For example, will a man go to hell for using a modern version of the Scriptures rather than the KJV or ASV? If yes, then we can have no fellowship with those who use them. If no (and we do not know of a single person, regardless of how radical he may be on the version issue that would answer yes), then to divide and draw lines of fellowship over them are ridiculous and sinful. Will a church (all its members who participate) be lost for having what is called a "divided assembly" or "youth worship"? If yes, we can have no fellowship with those who practice it; if no, then to divide over it and refuse fellowship to those who practice it would be sinful and wrong. Why divide the church over anything for which souls will not be lost?

When we cause division over non-essentials, the division we cause is worse than the thing over which we caused it. That is to say the effect (the division itself) is worse than the cause (the thing from which the division resulted).

We could go on with many more questions about things which threaten the peace and harmony of the church, but if we did we would find that upwards of 95 percent would fall into non-essential matters — matters over which it is sinful to divide. We therefore conclude that nothing short of the loss of salvation (for ourselves or for others) should be permitted to divide the church of God or to sever our fellowship with His people. If an issue is not fundamental (if the salvation of souls is not at stake) then we can be flexible and compromising without the loss of a single essential principle or doctrine; if it is fundamental (if the salvation of souls is at stake) then we must be firm and uncompromising. Or to sum up: we cannot fellowship that which would compromise the fundamentals (that

which is essential to salvation). But on the other hand we cannot make non-essentials matters of fellowship — that is, we cannot break fellowship when the issues do not involve the salvation of souls. So before we can Scripturally refuse fellowship to others we must be convinced that the matter over which we differ is serious enough to cause souls to be lost. If salvation is at stake, we have no choice but to divide or refuse fellowship; if salvation is not at stake, we have no choice (if we are to please our Lord), but to maintain the unity of the faith in the bond of peace.

## VICE AND VIRTUE

Times may change; we may change our minds; but vice and virtue do not change. This may seem strange since many things formerly considered wrong are now considered right and some things considered destructive to the soul are now looked upon as helpful. As Sir James Jeans noted, "Virtues and vices have frequently changed places as life moved on through the ages: witch-burning used to be virtue, and lending money at interest a vice." This statement can be true only when what men have thought was vice and virtue is under consideration, not when vice and virtue *per se* is the subject. It is true that legislation may define something as vice or virtue and then later legislation redefine it; even God's law has done this (e.g., the eating of swine flesh under the law of Moses was prohibited, Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8, but under the New Testament it is permitted, 1 Tim. 4:3-5). In such cases, vice and virtue *per se* are not under consideration; they are vice or virtue only as they relate to keeping the law. Thus the mind may change about vice and virtue, but vice and virtue remain the same regardless of how we may think or feel about them. The way we think does not change evil into good.

The way we think about a thing (unless the thing itself is indifferent) does not change its nature. For example: We know a lady who has argued for many years that the modern dance is not sinful . . . or even dangerous. But the way she views it does not change the fact that hundreds of people each week are stimulated on the dance floor



to commit fornication and adultery.

Everywhere we go today we find someone arguing that Christians have a Scriptural right to drink alcoholic beverages in moderation. But their so arguing does not change the fact that the Bible condemns all drinking for the purpose of intoxication. Nor does it change the fact that one out of every ten drinkers becomes an alcoholic — a hopeless drunk (or at least he is hopeless as long as he drinks).

Elsewhere in this issue we have reviewed a debate on homosexuality. In it one of the authors argues (he is himself a practicing homosexual) that homosexuality is an acceptable life-style in the eyes of the Lord. His basic argument is that the illegitimate practice of homosexuality does not argue against its legitimate practice. He illustrates with normal sex by saying that the illegitimate use of it (fornication, adultery, etc.), does not prove there is no legitimate use of sex (in marriage). He thus concludes that the Bible condemns the abuse of homosexuality and not homosexuality **per se**. But the one thing he utterly, absolutely, and miserably fails to do is to prove that there is such a thing as legitimate homosexuality. The Bible provides for legitimate

sexual fulfillment between male and female in marriage but it positively and unmistakably prohibits **all** homosexual practice. And how this man feels about it does not change the unthinkable vice into an acceptable virtue. No indeed!

While we may change our minds about some acts, as to whether they are vice or virtue, vice and virtue do not change. If a thing is wrong, it is wrong; if it is right, it is right. What we formerly considered virtue and vice might have been even then vice and virtue; or what we now think is vice and virtue might be virtue and vice respectively. That is, we may call good evil and evil good (Isa. 5:20), but that does not change good and evil. Our minds are just changed about them. We may therefore conceive right to be wrong and wrong to be right, but our conception does not change the nature of right and wrong.

We must therefore learn to draw our conceptions of right and wrong from the nature of things (and by what the Bible teaches about them) rather than by the way men think at the time and place where we live. Men can be wrong, but wrong can never be right and right is never wrong.

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# On Marriage And Divorce

Johnny Melton, Statesville, NC

“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” (Matt. 5:31-32.)

In order to adequately discuss these verses, I want to call your attention to a further statement by Jesus on the subject of marriage and divorce. In Matthew 19, verse 3 beginning, we find, “The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

Jesus' instruction of marriage and divorce came in an age, not unlike ours, when marriage was not held in high esteem and divorces were easily obtained. In the passage in Matthew 19, the Lord's enemies sought to tempt him, to snare him on the horns of a dilemma, but to no avail. Jesus was more than equal to their treacherous attempts.

When they asked, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” Jesus did not give a direct answer. Rather, He stressed the original purpose God had for men and women in marriage. It should be observed that Jesus made no mistake in His response to these Pharisees. I am convinced

that before it is ever proper to study the question of divorce, we must have a clear understanding of heaven's teaching on marriage. Jesus, therefore, sent His questioners to the book of Genesis and the fact that God made the human family male and female and formed the first home in Eden's bowers. The institution of marriage involves both “leaving” and “cleaving.” A husband and wife must leave father and mother and cleave unto each other, thus becoming **one flesh**. This union is sanctioned by God and is not to be severed by man. This is God's ideal will for the home. This principle can be succinctly stated as one man for one woman for one lifetime. Before it is ever right to discuss divorce, we must have a clear understanding of this vital principle.

Upon hearing Jesus' statement concerning God's ideal will for marriage, the Pharisees responded by asking, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away?” It is obvious from this response to our Lord's statement that these folks did not take the marriage seriously. In the first place, Moses never commanded divorce. It is true, that God gave instruction by Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 concerning the course to follow in the event of a divorce. But this instruction must not be construed as either commanding or even sanctioning divorce.

In verse 9 of Matthew 19, Jesus makes a very straightforward statement concerning heaven's view of marriage and divorce. “Whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” Jesus words are intended to stress the sanctity of the home. “Fornication” is a broader word than adultery and includes a variety of sexual sins. The Lord is stressing that a marriage is to be broken only on the basis of marital unfaithfulness. God does not approve any marriage that is entered following a divorce unless that divorce was prompted by marital unfaithfulness.

Jesus' language in Matthew 5:32, “But I

say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" is strong language. . . .

Jesus intended for it to be. Heaven wants men and women to commit themselves to one another and only the most serious of offenses should be allowed to cause a divorce.

## The Foundation Of Faith (Part 5)

**Jim Gardner, New Haven, CT**

Before we call an event a miracle, we ought to demand adequate proof that the event took place. This principle may seem too obvious to deserve discussion, but modern claims of miracles often violate it.

For example, several years ago, a friend called and told me the wonderful news that his wife had been healed miraculously of cancer! I congratulated him and asked for the details of the service. He replied that his wife had detected a small lump underneath the surface of her skin several weeks before, and had gone to her doctor, who examined her and scheduled her for a biopsy to determine whether the lump was cancerous. Before the biopsy took place, my friend and his wife attended a "healing service," at which prayers were offered on her behalf. When the biopsy showed no sign of cancer, my friend claimed a miracle. It does not take Perry Mason to spot the weak point in this argument. There is no proof she was miraculously healed, because there is no proof she was sick in the first place. The prayers for healing caused no discernible change in her condition. Only a small minority of such lumps prove cancerous. It is an essential feature of a miracle that it be amazing, but this woman's history is not even mildly surprising.

Against this background, we can understand why Jesus chose to work visible miracles. Indeed, in an age long before x-rays and other sophisticated medical tests, an invisible miracle would have been almost a contradiction in terms. People believed in Jesus because they witnessed his actions or believed the testimony of those who did. John emphasized that his testimony concerned "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld, and our hands have handled."

(1 John 1:1.)

The gospel writers chose to record many spectacularly vivid miracles. Consider the healing of leprosy. This dread disease ravaged the features and devoured the limbs of its victims. Imagine the horribly scarred leper, with the stumps that remained of his hands lifted to beg mercy from Jesus; and then remember that such supplicants received immediate, complete healing. Jesus gave them back their hands and their faces. Consider the man with the withered hand. Imagine him in the synagogue, with his grotesque and useless hand limp at his side; then remember that Jesus caused that hand to grow and take the shape and strength of health. Consider the stilling of the storm. Imagine the howling of the wind and the tumult of the waves; then remember how a word from Jesus brought sudden silence and peace. These events bear on their face the unmistakable stamp of divine intervention into the natural world.

Such events do not occur in the meetings of modern faith healers. Back trouble and migraine headaches are healed; but the maimed are not made whole, and deformities are not made right. Healers profess to conquer lung cancer, but they have their guards stop those with skin diseases from entering so that they will not ruin the show. Once in the middle of claiming a host of cures over invisible maladies, Kathryn Kuhlman was faced with a girl with an obvious skin ailment. Although all her other cures had been instantaneous, she told this girl that she would be cured in three days. Many of the other people that Miss Kuhlman claimed to cure that day were truly ill; but the audience had no way of knowing whether they had been healed. The audience was not present when three of them later died of the illnesses of which they had been supposedly cured. But to claim im-



mediately to cure this girl, when all could see the persistence of the disease, would have been just too obvious a fraud. What kind of a miracle is it that only occurs when no one is looking?

Several years ago, I worked with a young woman who had a deformed hand. She was very self-conscious about her hand, and I

am sure would have given anything to be healed. Friends invited her to a healing service at a "full-gospel" church. She went with high hopes. She returned in despair. The people at the church had made it clear to her that their healing was not for her. Her fault lay not in any lack of faith, but in too clear a need.

## YOUTH FOR CHRIST

# Glory In Their Shame

**Mike Cope, Wilmington, NC**

With the school year about half over, you have surely been reminded that relatively few of your classmates share the same Christian values which you treasure. In fact, many, like some Paul wrote of, "glory in their shame" (Phil. 3:19). The apostle is saying that people can become so distorted in their thinking and so perverted in their values, that they actually brag about things which should be shameful for them to admit. We see this all the time.

For instance, as you pass by certain groups in the school's corridors, notice how proud they are of their "gifted ability" to consume large amounts of alcohol. I can recall teenagers telling others about how they drank two more beers than anyone. And then they were still "man enough" to drive everyone back home. "They glory in their shame."

Walk on down the halls a little more, though, and you will likely hear some boys (and I emphasize that they are **boys** and not men) telling their jealous friends about "all the girls they've had." And, of course, the farther they went with their immorality, the more they have to brag about. "They glory in their shame."

Others you know display a rebellious attitude toward their parents: "Why, I told my old lady that I couldn't care less what she says. I'm going to the party anyway. And if she doesn't like it, that's her tough luck." They actually take pride in the very thing which should cause them to be ashamed!

Young people, beware of people who brag about shameful deeds. There is a much

better way to live, and there is something much more glorious of which we may joyfully boast: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.)

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# Restoring The Ancient Order

**Franklin Moore, Hendersonville, NC**

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein." (Jer. 6:16.)

This has been the distinctive plea of the prophets of God throughout history. The Old Testament is filled with case after case of God's people departing from His way and the rise of prophets preaching repentance and restoration.

Today's world is not much different. We too need to teach repentance and restoration. We too need to get back to the **old paths**. In an age of skepticism, liberalism, and secularism, it is increasingly difficult to find knowledgeable elders, courageous preachers, dedicated Bible teachers, and faithful members. Sadly enough, nothing is needed more!

## **Ring of the Prophets Needed Today**

Our Bible classes need to ring with the

words, "Thus saith the Lord," as did the prophets of old. We can convert men to God and be friends of the Bible if we will quit playing around and get down to the basic issue: that is, learning the Bible from cover to cover and faithfully imparting its teaching to those whom we are privileged to instruct. This is a serious, eternal matter. We dare not allow indifference to detour us from the solemnity of our task.

Jude exhorts those to whom he is writing, "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

We have a duty to God to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered." We have a duty to mankind to seek the old paths. We must "speak as the oracles of God." This is our obligation to God, to mankind, and to ourselves.



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## **THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN**

# Some Have Entertained Angels Unawares

**Sara Kemp, Stanley, NC**

Hospitality is probably an area that all of us fail in more than any other area. Hospitality is time consuming. It takes work and practice. If we practice being nice to each other and to our children, then we will have fewer problems in our homes and among strangers. When we practice true hospitality within our homes, then the results will overflow to include others.

Webster defines hospitality as, "The act of being hospitable, given to generous and cordial reception of guests; promising or suggesting generous and cordial welcome."

Many times we try to leave the responsibility of hospitality with the preacher and elders. But the Scriptures show who is required to practice hospitality.

"A bishop must then be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach." (1 Tim. 3:2.) So it is required of elders. But are elders the only ones who are to show hospitality?

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2.) Does this only apply to elders and preachers?

"But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke 14:13-14.) Does this apply only to the elders and the preachers?

"Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; for in so

doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.” (Rom. 12:20.) Does this apply only to the enders and the preachers?

Hospitality is not just applicable to elders and their wives and to preachers and their wives or to people who have large homes. According to Romans 12:12-13 hospitality is commanded of all who are Christians. “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality.” This passage is as much a command for showing hospitality as Acts 2:38 is a command for baptism.

There is one major factor that keeps many of us from practicing hospitality and that is fear. We are sometimes afraid we will say the wrong thing, that we will do the wrong thing, that no one will come if we ask them. We feel nervous about having people in our homes. We are sometimes just nervous about trying something new. Sometimes, however, we are just selfish about our time and money. We are afraid that it will interfere too much with our own personal life.

Fear has always been a problem and it stops many from doing God’s will. When the children of Israel finally reached the borders of the Promised Land, they appointed a group of spies to spy out the land. When the spies returned, they reported that the land was all that God had promised. They very much wanted to possess this land that flowed with milk and honey. But they were afraid. They saw giants that made them look like grasshoppers. God had told them to take possession but they were afraid.

Do we sometimes let our “giants” keep us from showing hospitality? Instead of trying to do the best we can, we let our “giants” interfere. God does not ask us to do the impossible. Christ did not come to eliminate the “giants” in our lives. But through His love, we can learn to overcome our fears and insecurities.

Many times, though, we fail to practice hospitality because of selfishness. This does not always apply to money, but it can. Most of us are selfish with our time. We want to spend our time doing what we want to do and not always what God wants us to do.

Showing hospitality requires time and effort. The ability to be hospitable has to be developed through time and effort. It is not something that comes naturally for most people. Hospitality is an attitude of giving and sharing.

It is so easy to slip into the habit of only inviting very close friends and relatives into our homes. Meeting and getting to know strangers is not easy. It has to be developed through practice. So many times we make excuses for not opening our homes and hearts to others: the house is not the way I want it to be; the children are too small so I will wait until they are a little older; I will wait until I retire, quit work and have more time; I need to get new curtains for the living room; the kitchen needs to be painted and on and on we could go, using one excuse after another. The only things that are really important are the attitudes we have toward others and the love that we have for God and His word.

The ground work for showing hospitality really begins long before we extend an invitation inviting someone into our home. If we enjoy life and enjoy people, we will make the acceptance of an invitation into our homes a worthwhile experience for ourselves and for others. According to Webster, worthwhile means, “Being worth the time spent, of sufficient value to repay the effort.” In order to make our lives worthwhile, we must use the time that God has given us to the best advantage. Each day we should try to accomplish something that will make the day a useful one and not just a day filled with trifles. When we have finally learned to fill our days with worthwhile activities, we will then know the joys of true Christianity.

Many people drift through life with no purpose or aim in life. They have nothing in particular to do and no place in particular to go. They aim at nothing and, of course, they reach nothing. Our **daily** goal should be to serve God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13). If we keep busy doing God’s will, there will be no time left for idleness, worry or any of the other things that can rob us of our energies.

Everyone is in such a rush today that we do not take the time to extend hospitality.



But it is one of the things that makes life worthwhile. A worthwhile life will be spent in service to others — family, friends, or strangers — whoever happens to need us. “But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant: even so the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Matt. 20:26-28.) Extending hospitality is one of the ways we can serve.

Never before in the history of the world has the spirit of giving and caring been as needed as it is today. More than anything else, the world needs thoughtful, kind-hearted, sharing, caring people. We were meant to serve and when we fail in this area, we cannot find the happiness that God intended for us to enjoy. The Bible gives us many examples of those who found true happiness in the joy of service. Jesus said those who would become the greatest must first become the servants of all.

Hospitality is more than just inviting someone into our homes for a meal. In Matthew 25 Jesus tells us to help others in such simple ways as feeding someone who is hungry, offering a drink of water to a thirsty person, welcoming a stranger, cheering

the sick, visiting those in jail. These are things anyone can do. They require no special talent or a large sum of money. Caring and giving of self are the only requirements. Almost anything can be bought with money except the love that comes from the heart. Hospitality begins in the heart.

Hospitality must also begin in the home. When our children are small, we can show hospitality to their friends. Our homes can be open to those children who might one day remember the warmth that was shown to them. In this day when many mothers are too busy to be bothered with “extra” children in the home, we can show the spirit of hospitality by opening our homes and hearts to our children’s friends. When our children become teenagers, we have an excellent opportunity to show hospitality. We do not need to make elaborate plans — a cookout, an ice cream supper, whatever is easy is what most teens like. It is not so much what we do as how we do it. This is an excellent time not only to show hospitality but to teach hospitality as well.

God will judge us according to how we react to the needs of others. He will not ask us what we know but how we practiced what we know (1 Pet. 4:7-11).

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## The Son – Privileges And Responsibilities (Part 1)

Glenn D. Martin, Elizabeth City, NC

The specific point of the first four verses of Hebrews 10 is that the system of sacrifices under the old covenant was but the shadow while Christ’s sacrifice is the substance or reality which takes away sin. Therefore, to go back to the Old Testament, and try to live by it today is to abandon the **divine substance** which is Christ, and go back to the **mere shadow**! To go back to the old covenant, the inspired writer is exhorting, is to turn away from the sacrifice which is sufficient, and go back to the sacrifices which were insufficient, and which purified the flesh only! “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” (Heb. 10:4.)

Jesus, the Messiah, made possible the taking away of the first covenant through His death, as Ephesians 2:13-16 reveals:

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” We are further informed that Jesus said, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,” therefore, “He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Heb. 10:9-10.) “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Heb. 10:14.)

It is simply amazing sometimes how much is contained in one passage of Scripture, and how much light one passage may

throw on another passage. The writer of Hebrews, in Hebrews 10:10-14, set forth the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice! Then in verse 15 he says, "Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us." And then he comments in verses 16-18, regarding what the Holy Spirit had said before, through Jeremiah the prophet of God: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Therefore, the fact that the new covenant was to convey remission of sins and the sins would not be remembered any more, indicates that the one sacrifice under the new covenant would be sufficient.

In the prophecy of the new covenant through Jeremiah, the Holy Spirit had indicated in verse 15, that the sacrifice of Christ, which dedicated the new covenant, would be entirely sufficient to take away sins, and would be offered, **once for all!** "By the which will," the new covenant, "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:10.)

For this study of the privileges and of the responsibilities we have as Christians, the whole seven verse paragraph, Hebrews 10:19-25, is needed! For these privileges and responsibilities result from the fact of the finality of the speech of God to men, through His Son, Jesus Christ. Remember, however, that this letter to the Hebrews is not intended to interpret the speech of the Son, but to insist upon His authority!

The first nine chapters of the Hebrew letter reveal the Son of God as being superior. Superior to angels, to Moses, to Joshua, and to Aaron! Also that through the superiority of God's dear Son there is established a new covenant written upon the heart, and based upon personal firsthand fellowship with God! And the result of this creation of a better covenant, is that of the establishment of a better system of worship. For in and through Christ we have a right of entry, not into an earthly tabernacle, but through the earthly

into the heavenly, into the holy of holies, so that we can worship God, without any other mediator than that one great high priest, Jesus the Christ!

It is at that point in the letter where this paragraph now under consideration begins. Let us read it from the American Standard Version: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated to us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: having our body washed with pure water, let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised: and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh." (Heb. 10:19-25.) Therefore, all these things being so privilege and responsibility must inevitably result.

As he had done before, the writer again turns aside to utter words of solemn exhortation and warning. In fact, the full passage here begins at verse 19 and ends with verse 37; and the later part of it (26-37), is characterized by warnings. But we are now dealing with the section revealing the responsibilities placed upon us, on account of our high and holy privilege in and through Jesus Christ, our Lord! The recognition of privilege is seen in the repetition of the word "having" twice over, and the recognition of responsibility in the repetition of the words "let us" three times. In this way, therefore, let us consider the matter, beginning with the privileges referred to.

Remember, as we consider these privileges, that we have seen God's Son superior to Moses, in the fact that He is Son and Master of the house of God; He is superior to Joshua, in that He leads His people into eternal rest; and superior to Aaron, in that His priesthood is forever, after the order of Melchizedek. We have seen the new center of worship established by Jesus, and we have seen the possibility of our approach to

God, upon the divine basis of a new spiritual covenant. And now the writer makes no reference to Moses, to Joshua, or to Aaron, but to that great fact of our access to the most holy place in the very presence of God, through the mediation and high priesthood of our Lord! "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter in. . . ." (Heb. 10:10.) That is the first having, and it refers to our right to access to God, based upon all the things that have been said concerning the Son of God!

The place is referred to, and under the symbolism of the tabernacle, the place is the most holy place, beyond the veil, wherein (in the old covenant), was found the Ark of the Covenant, with the mercy seat, and the shining light of the glory of God Himself! Also, we are reminded of the way of our entrance: ". . . by the blood of Jesus . . . through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. 10:19-20.) And the value of the expression, "His flesh" is exactly that found in the prologue of the gospel account of John, when John referred to our Lord by saying, "the Word was made

flesh."

We must carefully remember, however, that our right of entrance is through the rending of the veil. Not because God was manifest in the flesh, but by the death, burial, and resurrection of that Messiah, sent by God as the sacrifice once for all.

Continuing in verse 20, the writer describes this as a "new and living way," and the Greek word rendered new here, literally means "newly slain," so the phrase means "a newly-slain and living way." In this connection we call to mind Revelation 5:6, where the apostle John said, "And I beheld . . . in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain. . . ." This is our way, this New and Living Way, into the most holy place within the veil, and we have no other right of entry.

Man, by reason of sin, has forfeited his right of fellowship with God. And this right of fellowship with God, even as Adam and Eve enjoyed with Him, was restored by the rending of the veil of Christ's flesh, that is, by the mystery of His atoning death for the sins of all men for all time.

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## Enemies Of The Home

**Howard Winters, West Jefferson, NC**

There is perhaps nothing more vital to the stability of society and the success of the church than good happy contented stable homes — homes as God made them to be. But one does not have to be a Solomon to know that homes are in trouble. They are broken up by divorce at the least whim; they are neglected or ridiculed as a back number; they are bombarded from many sides and from many enemies. And many (even in the church of God) are succumbing to the attacks rather than resisting them. We have no fear but that the home will ultimately survive, but we do fear that many will not survive the attacks of its enemies.

Following are a few of the home's enemies:

1. **Infidelity.** By this I mean the sexual violation of marital purity. We live in a sex saturated society — a society in which sex is used to sell everything from toothpaste to

airplanes. With many pleasure seems to be the only purpose for living. They thus throw off all restraints and make promiscuity a way of life. This hedonistic philosophy has infiltrated millions of marriages. Marital mates thus feel no obligation to limit their physical pleasures to one and only one partner. It seems now that in most marriages the back door is left open so as to enable the mates to slip out and carry on a back street affair. But this is not in God's plan for marriage. He ordained that one man and one woman be bound together for life, and that they be totally true to each other. His plan reveals no exceptions to this.

In God's design for marriage each partner is to be devoted to filling the other's needs (1 Cor. 7:3-5). No one else is to enter the picture. To violate this trust (that is, the marriage vows or destroy the purity of the home) is the most serious crime God has revealed against the home. In fact, it is the



only one that is serious enough to receive heaven's approval for terminating the marriage — it is the only Scripture given for divorce in the New Testament (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). Thus anyone who involves himself with a third party in the marital relations has taken into his bosom the archenemy of the home.

For this reason no married person should ever permit himself to have any kind of relationship with the opposite sex (other than with his marital mate) which has any sexual connotations or overtones. Of course God built into us an attraction to and for the opposite sex, and perhaps we are all flirts in one sense or another (we usually have favorite bank tellers, service station attendants, or enjoy the delightful conversation of someone at work or play), but we must learn to keep our relationship on the friendship level rather than on the level of sexual attraction. To go farther would be to enjoy forbidden pleasure and to engage in dangerous practices — to play with the fire which destroys homes.

**2. Division.** By this I mean the loss of oneness of aim, purpose, and goals, the division of life and interest which results when marital mates go their own separate ways, when they build their own separate lives, when they have their own aims and their own goals. I mean the kind of division that has taken place when about the only thing the two have in common is that they live in the same house.

God designed marriage so that the mates would be of the same mind — that is, they combine their lives in order to work toward common goals. While the Biblical statement "and the two shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5-6), primarily refers to their sexual union (1 Cor. 6:16), that which joins their bodies together, their becoming one flesh thenceforth extends to the whole sphere of their lives. They are to act as one, live as one, work as one, speak as one . . . because they are one! Thus when marital partners start building separate lives, they give a strong enemy of the home a great advantage — they let an enemy get its foot in the door.

This is why I have advocated for many years that joint action, joint accounts (both

checking and savings), joint ownership, joint obligations, joint planning, joint agreement on all decisions, etc., should characterize the marriage. Indeed such is mandatory (in my judgment) to a happy and successful marriage. Since the two are one, they should not try to have separate possessions. Rather they should stand together, work together, suffer together, succeed together, fail together, and face every aspect of life together, whether it be in sickness or health, joy or sorrow, peace or turmoil. They are one and they must think and act as one. To do otherwise would be to invite a disastrous enemy into the home.

**3. Independence.** This overlaps with what I said on division (where the mates, who are one, act as two and thus divide their lives and interests), but there is another aspect of this that I want to emphasize, namely, the developments of sources of income which establishes each as financially independent. While this certainly has many advantages (and is not wrong *per se*), it can become a great enemy of the home.

In former days, few wives worked outside the home. They were the homemakers. The husbands were the wage earners. This made the wives almost totally dependent upon their husbands for their livelihood. In those days there was but one income and the whole family shared it. This was the system . . . and it worked well then. When women married, they usually had only one of two choices: make the marriage work or go back home to their parents (and sooner or later there were no parents to go home to). Nearly all of them chose the first alternative — they made the marriage work, regardless of the personal sacrifice. This dependence, in my judgment, contributed to the stability of the home. The consequence of a failure, especially for women, was financial disaster.

But an entirely new situation has developed in our country. Nearly all wives now work outside the home (which is not an evil within itself but the very best we can say is that it often puts additional strain on marriages). For this reason, they have their own incomes (which is often equal to or superior to that of their husbands) and if

necessary can provide for themselves. This makes both the husband and the wife financially independent of the other. And when this independence is exerted, it tends to weaken the ties — neither is dependent upon the other for a livelihood.

As Christians we cannot change the situation, even though we might long for the good old days or look forward to days of greater independence. Even among us both mates usually have to work in order to maintain the kind of life-style to which we have become accustomed. This is not wrong within itself. But we must recognize the danger of independence — that independence of each other is an enemy of the home. And by recognizing this enemy we can guard against it and strengthen the areas where husbands are still dependent on the wives and wives the husbands. We can define these areas and make the most of them. (The interdependence of marriage is taught in the following Scriptures: Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-9; Eph. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 7:1-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-7.)

4. **Terminality.** By this I mean the attitude that marriage can and may be terminated if either or both parties become unhappy or dissatisfied with it. But not so. No marriage can be broken without serious sin involved (the sin may be all on the part of one party, but it will still be there). This fact we need to face: and this fact we need to instill into all young people before they enter into marriage.

Far too many in our day marry, not with the idea of the marriage being permanent, but with the attitude that if it does not work

out they can always get a divorce. There can be no doubt but that this concept is an enemy of the home. While there is no way known to me to ascertain how many homes are broken because of this attitude, I suspect that it is a major cause in most divorces. Of course other problems may be the ones that appear on the surface, but underneath many of them is the idea that marriage can be dissolved because of problems. It seems to me that if the marital partners had the concept of the permanency of marriage rather than the possibility of its termination, most of the overt problems would be solved and the marriage saved. But because many go into marriage with the concept that it can be broken at will, it is often terminated over matters which could otherwise be easily worked out.

This enemy of the home can be stopped at the very threshold if we understand and practice Scriptural teaching on marriage and the home. God designed marriage to be permanent — and He has never changed His design. This can be seen from the following Scriptural facts:

(1) The vows made are “until death do us part.” (Rom. 7:2-3.)

(2) God joins the two together, making them one unit. (Matt. 19:6.)

(3) The two are joined in body by sexual union. (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 6:16.)

(4) They are made members of each other, bone of bone and flesh of flesh — that is, one is an extension of the other. (Eph. 5:28-29.) When this characterizes a marriage, it would make as much sense to cut off the legs or to gouge out the eyes as to put away a mate.

(5) They cleave (as adhesive) to each other. (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31.)

(6) They are heirs together of the grace of life. (1 Pet. 3:7.)

In conclusion let it be noted that our homes are worth far more than it will take to save them. When enemies threaten them, we should expel the enemy firmly and quickly as unwanted and unwelcomed guests. Our homes are so vital to the Christian system that by saving them we may well be saving our souls; and by a failure to save them we are most certainly putting our souls in danger.

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# Hudson Nichols

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

For fourteen years Hudson Nichols has been a sound and devoted servant in the Carolinas and in Gastonia in particular. When he terminates his full-time duties with the Gastonia church he will leave with a record of unselfish and faithful ministry.

Brother Nichols' lovely and devoted helper in life is Marilyn, a native of Corinth, Mississippi. Their sons, Hudson Ray and Lindsey Joe, grew to maturity at Gastonia and are now students at Freed-Hardeman College. Three years ago (July 16, 1979) their daughter, Sharon, died in an automobile accident. She was returning from a weekend visit with her parents to her teaching position in Alabama. She was twenty-three.

Under the influence of his famous father, Gus Nichols, Hudson began preaching when he was fourteen in Walker County, Alabama. Local work has been with two congregations in Mississippi, and in Louisiana, Tennessee and Alabama.

Gospel meetings have taken him to a dozen states. He has also traveled extensively to be on lectureships and youth programs. This includes a regular spot on the "Gus Nichols Words of Truth Lecture-ship" in Jasper, Alabama.

Hudson is committed to the importance of strong local congregations. In his located work he has assisted two congregations in

the selection of their first eldership. In four congregations he has encouraged their appointment of additional elders. This includes the congregation at Gastonia.

With reliance on Scriptural principles and with a sincere concern for his brethren, Nichols has effected reconciliation where division has occurred.

Those of us who have worked closely with him know that Hudson can always be depended upon for Scriptural and thoughtful advice. His warm humor, untiring energy, and love for the entire brotherhood has made him a special friend.

The Nichols are a beautiful family. Marilyn is always pleasant, shares her husband's sense of humor, and is always supportive of Hudson in particular and the work of the church in general. The Gus Nichols family is famous as one of the brotherhood's most admired "clans." The Hudson Nichols family is a lovely extension of that tradition.

Unlike a few cases which come to our attention, Hudson is not leaving Gastonia because of being unloved or without the confidence of the people. Instead preacher and congregation are cooperating fully during this period of transition. Larry Eppley has been selected to follow as the new preacher. In this Larry will have a special advantage — the advantage of working where Hudson Nichols has labored before him.

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## **FIRST PRINCIPLES**

# Common Sense Comparisons

**David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

New Testament teaching on what is required on the human side to obtain salvation is so simple that a careful reading of the passages ought to convince anyone. The theologians of various sectarian systems, however, have so complicated these matters that people often fail to study with ordinary common sense. It is true that there are difficult precepts in Scripture (2 Pet. 3:16); but the commands which must be obeyed in

order to be saved are simple and plain.

Jesus said plainly in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." A simple question is: "Who did Jesus say 'shall be saved?' " Answer: "He that believeth and is baptized."

Someone may object, however, arguing that in the last part of the verse baptism is not mentioned. This objection has no validity because a different result is in view. If one is seeking the result of salvation he



must comply with the terms of salvation. But if he is seeking the result of damnation unbelief is an adequate cause.

One common sense approach to Jesus' words is to notice the tense of the verbs, which can be easily recognized by people who have only the slightest concept of English grammar. "He that believeth and is baptized" are conditions stated in the present tense, while "shall be saved" is future tense. Without getting involved in technicalities of grammar, anyone can see that both present tense conditions must precede the future tense results.

Another common sense illustration of this passage is to compare it to the simple equation:  $2 + 2 = 4$ . According to the Lord: Belief + Baptism = Salvation. Clearly, however, two minus two does not equal four and belief minus baptism does not equal salvation.

Another baptism passage about which there is controversy is Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Strangely, many will admit the necessity of repentance in this passage while denying the necessity of baptism. Yet a simple, unbiased reading of the passage shows that whatever relationship "repent" has to "the remission of sins" "be baptized" also

has. Denominational muddlers have labored mightily to hide this point, but an honest reader can hardly miss it. If repentance comes before remission of sins, so also must baptism.

Still it will be asserted by some that "for the remission" does not mean **in order to obtain** remission of sins. Rather, they say, it means **because** sins have already been remitted. They compare it to "hanged for murder." But aside from the fact that the Greek does not allow this interpretation, it is evidently wrong because of the inclusion of repentance. Whatever the text says about baptism for the remission of sins, it says also about repentance. If Peter was saying to be baptized because their sins were already forgiven, he was also saying to repent because their sins were already forgiven! Such would be ridiculous.

To determine that "for the remission of sins" means in order that forgiveness may be obtained one needs only to compare Matthew 26:28 which says that Christ's blood "is shed for many for the remission of sins." Obviously Christ's blood was not shed because sins were already forgiven. And neither are people to repent and be baptized because their sins are already forgiven. They are to be baptized in order that their sins might be forgiven.



## BROTHERHOOD NEWS

Dennis Conner, Yadkinville, NC

### World Radio Offered Time in Poland

**Vienna, Austria.** In an amazing development, the Polish Government has offered free radio time to World Radio. Next year four forty-minute programs will be broadcast over Radio Warsaw 1, the primary radio station in Poland. The speakers on the programs will be Mike Dawidow and his father, Walenty Dawidow. The younger Dawidow was largely responsible for the food convoys to Poland last year that gained international attention. The radio programs will have a potential listening au-

dience of 34 million.

Since official recognition of the church in Poland, 55 have been baptized into Christ in the last six months. The advantages of government recognition have opened the door for the growth of the church of the Lord in Poland.

### Walks to Worship

**Udorn Thani, Thailand.** Brother Kone was baptized this past January and has suffered almost continual hardship from his family since he became a Christian. He worships every Sunday in the village of Non Phu Thong and hardly ever misses a service.

Carolina Christian

He recently told his family, who threatened to throw him out, "No matter what you do to me, I will continue to go to church." Brother Kone walks three miles to the home of another Christian where the worship services are held. Brother Kone is 70 years old!

### **Freed-Hardeman Lectureship**

**Henderson, Tenn.** The 47th annual Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship will be held February 7-11, 1983. The theme of the lectureship is "The Church of Tomorrow: Horizons and Destiny." Some of the highlights of the 1983 program will be the

honoring of J.A. McNutt at the appreciation dinner and the open forum, to be conducted this year by Alan Highers.

### **Mustard Seed News (Matt. 13:31-32)**

The church continues to grow and spread beyond our own borders. In the Philippines, 70 have recently obeyed the gospel. In a primitive area of New Guinea 25 became Christians during a recent trip by missionaries. Twenty radio listeners in Guatemala have put on Christ. More than 400 have been baptized this year in north-east Thailand.

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## **Carolina Church News**

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

#### **David Pharr, Rock Hill, SC**

Please send news reports to David Pharr, P.O. Box 988, Rock Hill, SC 29731-6988. Items must be received by the next-to-the-last Thursday of the month. We would like to be on your bulletin mailing list.

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

**Hickory.** The Barry Elliotts, now located in Hickory, have the following address and telephone: Route 2, Box 78, Conover, NC; 464-8711.

**Fayetteville.** Ray Vanderpool has been added to the pastorate at Helen Street.

**Roanoke Rapids.** Bill Harper of Hopewell, Virginia, was scheduled to hold a weekend meeting at Roanoke Rapids the last weekend in October, but suffered a slight stroke two days before the meeting. Cliff Laird of Hopewell and Phil Powers of Colonial Heights, Virginia, filled in for him, and the church enjoyed an excellent meeting. Two placed membership and four were baptized before or during the meeting.

**Hendersonville.** The following item was published in the Hendersonville paper regarding the new minister there: "Franklin Moore was born May 24, 1955, in Swainsboro, Ga., the son of Mr. & Mrs. J.W. Moore. After serving four years in the U.S. Coast Guard, stationed primarily in Elizabeth City, he and his wife, the former Patricia Mead, moved to Denver, Colo., where he began his formal education to

prepare to preach. After graduating from the Bear Valley School of Preaching in Denver, he, his wife, and now a son, moved to Moore, Okla., where he served as the assistant minister of a congregation while continuing his education at Oklahoma Christian College in Oklahoma City, and the Oklahoma College of the Bible in McCloud, Okla. After two years he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in Bible with a minor in Greek and Hebrew. He and his family then moved to Marietta, Okla., where he served as the minister for approximately 1½ years. In October 1982 he and his family moved to Hendersonville to work with the church of Christ that meets on Haywood Road. There will be another addition to his family in March of 1983.

#### **Born of Water and Spirit, NC**

Asheboro, 1; Washington, 1; Roanoke Rapids, 4; Hendersonville, 4; Broad Street, Statesville, 1; Archdale, Charlotte, 1; Burlington, 1; Raleigh, 6; West Jefferson, 1. Total: 20.

### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Union.** Regular attendance has been around 150, but on their "Family Day" there were over 250 present, November 7. No wonder John White is grinning so much.

**Mauldin.** Garry W. Ferrell is the new preacher, having come April 1 from a work

in South Dakota.

**Bennettsville.** A door-knocking campaign assisted by brethren from Tarrant, Alabama, was successful in November.

**Duncan.** Otis Burch has been added to the eldership.

**Spartanburg.** At Central, October saw all time records broken in attendance and contributions.

**Greenville.** Three additional deacons have been appointed at Northeast.

### **Born of Water and Spirit, SC**

Woodruff, 4; Northeast, Greenville, 4; Central, Spartanburg, 2; West Columbia, 1; Myrtle Beach, 2; St. Andrews Road, Columbia, 2; Essex Village, Charleston, 1; North Charleston, 1; Mauldin, 7; Crawford Road, Rock Hill, 1; Charlotte Avenue, Rock Hill, 1; Union, 3; Bennettsville, 1. Total: 30.

### **Woodruff**

JESSE HAM, JR., Reporting: Since our last report of the work here in Woodruff, some good things have happened and are still happening. Our contribution is still holding around \$325.00 per week. Our attendance is in the middle forties. Since the middle of September, we have had eight (8) people of the congregation to recognize sin (omission and commission) in their lives and repent. We have also witnessed four (4) precious souls born into the Kingdom here by baptism for the remission of their sins.

Brethren, there are also others that are on the threshold of obedience to the Gospel. Several new people have enrolled in our Bi-

ble Correspondence Course. We have just completed a very successful series of Gospel Meetings in which brother Milton S. Parker did a splendid job presenting God's word. There were a good number (15, I believe), non-Christians from the community in attendance at least one time. Some even attended as many as four nights. We pause and thank God and give Him the glory for this and also thank you, our brethren, for the moral and financial support. Had it not been for your assistance, these things might not have been possible. We will continue to keep you posted on things as they develop.

### **Southeastern Children's Home**

Thomas L. Winter recently began working with Southeastern Children's Home as Director of Child and Family Services. Southeastern began in 1968, and has cared for scores of children since its beginning through Group Homes. At the present time, Southeastern operates one group home in Sumter, SC, where six children are currently receiving care.

Brother Winter's work will include the establishment of a Child Placing program for Southeastern Children's Home. This will enable the Home to place children in Christian foster and adoptive homes, as well as continuing to minister through the Group Home in Sumter. Readers interested in learning more about how they might serve as foster or adoptive parents can contact Brother Winter at Southeastern Children's Home, 3506 Edwards Road, Taylors, SC 29687.

Brother Winter and Brother R.W. Senn, Superintendent of Southeastern, are available to speak to congregations in the Carolinas about the Children's Home work, and would welcome any questions about the work.

### **Union**

JOHN WHITE, Reporting: September was another good month for us. There were three baptisms and one restoration.

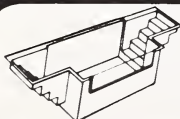
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*"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."* — Jim Ryun

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# Editorial Book Views

**A Debate on Homosexuality**, Thomas F. Eaves, Sr., and Dr. Paul Johnson; T&D Bookshelf, PO Box 49036, Algood, TN 38501; 144 pages, paper \$4.95.

Homosexuality is a subject that is repulsive to the minds of most people (and it should be to all people). And for this reason they turn away from it and hope it will go away. But it is not going away. It is a growing menace in our society, and one that is coming out into the open and demanding recognition and respect (which Christians can never give it). Our best defense against it is to be informed. And there is no better way to understand a subject than to see both sides presented and countered in debate. Thomas Eaves is a widely known gospel preacher who faithfully upholds the truth in this discussion. Dr. Paul Johnson is a practicing homosexual who tries to twist the Bible to make it approve of his perverted practice. And while his misuse and abuse of the Scriptures is deplorable, outrageous, and inexcusable, he probably presents his case about as well as it can be presented. Eaves basic argument is that the Bible condemns all homosexuality because it is intrinsically sinful. His proof is plain Bible statements. Dr. Johnson argues that the Bible teaches that it is not sinful *per se*. He argues that the illegitimate use of a thing does not argue against its legitimate use. For example, the illegitimate use of normal sex (adultery, fornication, etc.), does not prove there is no legitimate use (in marriage). He thus concludes that all the passages used by Eaves are condemnation of the abuse of homosexuality. But Eaves counters devastatingly that there is no such thing as a legitimate homosexual practice. The Bible provides for legitimate sexual fulfillment between male and female (in marriage) but it positively prohibits all homosexual practices. You will learn much from this book that will help you defend pure Biblical moral from the permissiveness which has permeated our society.

**Voices Crying in the Wilderness**, David Roper; privately published, 1801 Brown  
December 1982

Trail, Bedford, TX 76021; 475 pages, cloth \$15.95.

The effort to restore New Testament Christianity is one of the most fascinating stories ever told. And any well written history of that effort is well worth studying. David Roper has rendered the brotherhood a great service in the writing and publishing of this book. He not only writes of a fascinating historical movement, he does it in a fascinating fashion. And he covers it from a broader perspective than any history of the movement we have read before. The book is subtitled, "**A History of the Lord's Church With Special Emphasis on Australia** (where the author once served as a missionary). He starts with the need of restoration and its early beginnings in both America and Great Britain and then moves to the pioneer days in Australia. From then on he weaves the story of the movement in different countries into one garment, retaining the coloring of each country, but always with the work of Australia in the background and forefront. He tells how the movement began, how it grew, how it stumbled and fell into apostasy, and the continuing effort at restoration. After you have read it you will have a greater appreciation of the principle of restoration and a much broader perspective from which to view the movement worldwide. The faith, failures, trials, and triumphs of its proponents are all chronicled. You will be introduced to some heretofore unknown giants of the faith and be shown their strength and weaknesses. You will learn why the movement faltered in Australia and the principles which will cause it to succeed or fail elsewhere. We recommend that you put this one high on your reading list. Its reading will repay you in the historical lore of our historical heritage; its study will inform you of the fundamental principles upon which the restoration movement was launched.

All books reviewed here may be ordered from **Carolina Christian Bookstore**, P.O. Box 8234, Sta. A, Greenville, S.C. 29604.

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